

Pope meets Arab delegation

VATICAN CITY (Agencies) — Pope John Paul II on Saturday met with an Arab League delegation seeking to mediate an end to the Lebanese conflict and expressed concern for the Christian community there, the Vatican said. The Pope received the foreign ministers of Saudi Arabia, Morocco and Algeria in a 35-minute private audience. Vatican spokesman Joaquin Navarro said the ministers described their efforts to bring peace to a "sovereign and independent Lebanon" and voiced their concern about the current situation in the country. Navarro reported the Pope said he hopes their work assures the "independence, freedom and integrity of Lebanon and the safeguarding of its particular status as a pluralistic country." The Pope also "expressed his well-known anxious concern for all the Lebanese and, in particular, for the future of the Christian community," the spokesman said. The Arab League delegation also met with Cardinal Agostino Casaroli, the Vatican secretary of state, and with Italian Premier Giulio Andreotti and Foreign Minister Gianni De Michelis.

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Ceausescu, wife, top aides arrested but thousands killed

Bloodbath in Romania

BUCHAREST (Agencies) — Nicolae Ceausescu and his wife Elena were captured by the army Saturday, a day after a popular revolt swept them from power, their opponents announced on television.

The announcement came as fierce fighting raged around the country between army troops backing the revolt and well-equipped elite police units loyal to Ceausescu. Hundreds of lives were lost in continuing battles described as a bloodbath.

Ion Iliescu, a member of the National Salvation Committee, announced on television that the "dictatorial family, Nicolae and Elena Ceausescu, was captured."

Referring to Ceausescu as a "poison hyena," he said the former president, who had ruled since 1965, and his wife, the second most powerful person in the country under the old regime, would be tried.

Also captured were Emil Bobu, the third most powerful person in the country who assumed command when the Ceausescus were travelling abroad, and Ceausescu's brother, Ilie, formerly a deputy defence minister, Iliescu said.

Romanian radio, which like the

Hungarian Foreign Minister Gyula Horn announced on Hungarian television that Warsaw Pact foreign ministers would meet Sunday. He did not say where or when the meeting would take place.

Romanian radio said more than 12,000 people had been killed in one town alone since the uprising began there. Like in other Soviet bloc countries further on the road to reform, the protesters sought an end to dictatorial one-party rule.

Among the dead were 7,614 people first detained by pro-Ceausescu units and then executed, said the report.

Bucharest radio reported early Saturday that all political detainees had been released.

In Timisoara Saturday, 800 kilometres west of Bucharest, the entire city seemed to fill the streets in celebration. Crowds built bonfires fuelled by portraits of Ceausescu that had been ripped down.

"This is something we never expected to happen. The dictator is gone," said Ingeborg Kizarska, standing at a cathedral where she said more than 30 children were gunned down along with other demonstrators Sunday.

Hundreds of people dug up

mass graves in forested areas of Timisoara, searching for loved ones killed by troops. U.S. and West German TV showed grisly footage of rows of unearthed bodies, their feet bound together.

The upheaval comes at the close of a historic year in which the hardline leaderships of Poland, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, East Germany and Bulgaria were ousted by massive protests and replaced by pro-democracy reformers.

Despite the fighting in Romania, tens of thousands of jubilant people celebrated in the centre of Bucharest Saturday morning, waving flags with the hated Communist symbol ripped from its centre and chanting "Ceausescu is gone."

Bursts of heavy machine-gun and automatic weapons fire echoed across the city and taxis with red crosses rushed the wounded to hospitals. Helicopter gunships strafed soldiers and civilians, some of whom had also taken up arms against Ceausescu's forces.

Approximately 54 bodies were piled in a room of the emergency hospital in Bucharest, most of them civilians.

"We have some hundreds wounded, and this is only one

hospital," said Dr. Marius Scarlat.

Dr. Christian Toma, a dentist, accused Ceausescu's security forces, known as securitate, of blind orgies of bloodshed. "They shoot at the hospital, they destroy blood, they shoot doctors. This is not war, this is atrocity," he told the Associated Press.

The security forces fighting the country's newly declared leaders were Ceausescu's hated and feared instrument of repression for years. At 700,000, the special police troops outnumber regular army forces by more than 4-to-1.

East bloc news agencies cited unconfirmed reports that Libyan and Syrian mercenaries were helping the Ceausescu loyalists. Bucharest radio announced shortly after noon (1100 GMT) that "Arab troops" were attacking the building, without providing any detail.

But the Libyan Foreign Ministry Saturday denied the reports in a dispatch by the official news agency JANA.

Military helicopters piloted by pro-Ceausescu forces dropped leaflets in the downtown core, Bucharest Radio said. It cited the leaflet as warning insurgents to

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Israeli soldiers detain Palestinians in the occupied West Bank

Israelis kill 2 in Gaza, shot and wound dozens

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM

(Agencies) — Israeli soldiers Saturday shot dead two Palestinian youths in clashes in Rafah refugee camp in the Gaza Strip Saturday, hospital officials said.

Residents said the youths were killed when soldiers opened fire on masked youths painting uprising slogans on walls in the camp. The killings raised the death toll in the two-year-old uprising against Israel to 605 Palestinians.

Troops wounded at least 12 Palestinians in protests that raged throughout Rafah after the killings, hospital officials said. In other clashes in the strip, troops shot and wounded six more Palestinians, they said.

Five Palestinians were shot and wounded during clashes with troops in Tulkarm village in the West Bank, hospital officials there said.

In Bethlehem, Israeli paratroopers closed stores and ordered holiday shoppers home Saturday after a clash with masked youth across from the traditional site of the birth of Christ.

Meanwhile, visiting South African Archbishop Desmond Tutu bowed his head in silent prayer at a memorial to slain Palestinians and told Arab religious leaders and activists that

"we support your struggle for statehood and independence."

Tutu, the first black to head the Anglican Church in South Africa, arrived Friday and is to conduct Christmas Eve masses in Bethlehem and nearby Beit Sahour.

Tutu met Christian and Muslim religious leaders in Jerusalem's walled Old City Saturday. At the Al Aqsa Mosque compound, Islam's third holiest site, he told clerics and Palestinian nationalists:

"We also have to say we bear no animosity to the Jewish people. We call into question the policies of the Israeli government."

In Bethlehem, Franciscan monks held a candlelight prayer service in the church cave where the star of Bethlehem marks the traditional birthplace of Jesus.

Nearby, beneath the Christmas tree in Manger Square, the army set up a tent for troops on duty. Christian leaders have declared Christmas a day of mourning in honour of Palestinians killed in the uprising.

Masked youth burned tires and hurled stones at army patrols across from the Church of the Nativity.

Troops dispersed the stonethrowers by shooting in the air and firing teargas into the

narrow alleyways of the nearby marketplace, where the youth fled.

Paratroopers and purple-bereaved troops from the Givati Brigade ran through the marketplace shouting "Ruhi Al Beit," to holiday shoppers and demanded that local youths use brooms to sweep the streets clean of debris from the burning tyres.

One enraged woman shopper turned to a soldier and said: "You can't close the shops, this is our holiday," but the soldier ordered her home.

Slogans were seen throughout the town calling for increased clashes with troops to mark the holiday.

"Let's escalate against the Zionists on Christmas Day," was spray-painted in black on one stone wall. It was signed by the underground leadership of the uprising.

The underground leadership had called on shopowners to stay open until 5 p.m. and not close at noon to mark a Palestinian strike that has been in force since the start of the uprising.

Also Saturday, the Islamic fundamentalist Hamas movement cancelled a Christmas Day strike after protests from Palestinian Christians and rescheduled the work stoppage for Dec. 27.

Nabulsi: No new probe into Petra Bank affair

By P.V. Vivekanand
Jordan Times Staff Writer

AMMAN — The Central Bank of Jordan (CBJ) Saturday ruled out meeting any of the "preconditions" sought by the former head of Petra Bank for his return to the Kingdom and emphasised that there was no plan or intention to launch a fresh review of the affairs of the bank, which was taken over by the Economic Security Committee (ESC) in August this year.

CBJ Governor Mohammad Saad Al Nabulsi confirmed that a list has been drawn up of experts and specialists to "assist the military court to proceed with the case" against Ahmad Chalabi, founder and ex-chairman of Petra Bank which was ordered merged with the Jordan Gulf Bank. Chalabi, who left Jordan shortly after the takeover and mer-

ger order, remains outside the country.

"There is no review or fresh investigation into the Petra Bank affair; we have already reached our conclusions," Nabulsi said. "This committee will only help the martial law authorities in technical issues related to the case." The CBJ governor told the Jordan Times in response to a story carried by the newspaper which was told by sources that a "fresh hearing" was being planned on the affair.

The experts and specialists, including representatives of local banks and auditors, will help the martial law authorities "in their proceedings with the case," Nabulsi said.

"I expect that no less than 15 civil cases (related to banking) will be filed against Chalabi," he added. "This is separate from the criminal aspects of the case."

Firmly dismissing what Cha-

labi said he was seeking as "realistic gestures" that would facilitate his return to Jordan to "clear things up" of the affairs of the bank he founded in 1977, Nabulsi said the authorities were determined to press charges against the Iraqi-born banker. "It is up to him to return or not," Nabulsi said. "But we are not going to meet any of his conditions."

Among the "gestures" sought by Chalabi are: a repeal of the charge that he had left Jordan through illegal channels and a retraction of an ESC order sequestering property owned by the Chalabi family, pending the final outcome procedures adopted against the banker, who has been named as one of the prime suspects in the case which includes charges of embezzlement, violation of banking laws and foreign exchange regulations and speculation against the Jordanian dinar running into millions.

"We still believe that Chalabi is the most daring swindler in the history of world banking," Nabulsi declared.

In the same vein, Nabulsi also challenged Chalabi to make good a threat to file a case against the CBJ and the new management of Petra Bank in a U.S. court.

Chalabi told the Jordan Times in a telephone call he initiated from an undisclosed location that "procedures are in place for a case in a United States court" seeking "damages and relief" against the takeover of Petra International Banking Corporation (PIBC), Washington, D.C. by the CBJ and a new management committee which took control of Petra Bank in August. PIBC is an affiliate of Petra Bank and a majority of its shares are owned by the mother bank.

The case names Chalabi and his brother Talal Chalabi as the

"plaintiffs" and members of the Petra Bank Management Committee, and the governor and deputy governor of the CBJ as well as the finance minister, Basel Jarrahneh — who is head of the ESC — as the "defendants." The case, which is not formally filed, alleges that PIBC was the victim of a "conspiracy" and seeks about \$100 million in damages. However, Chalabi told the Jordan Times that "The case could be stopped anytime," implying that the door was open for a compromise deal with the authorities over his return to Jordan.

However, Nabulsi's comments Saturday indicated that the authorities were in no mood for any compromise. "Let him file his case," said the CBJ governor. "In fact, such a case will help us expose him and press our case in the United States."

U.S. beefs up Panama forces

PANAMA CITY (R) — The United States sent 2,000 more troops into Panama Saturday to help 23,000 soldiers already there battle against a rebellion and growing resistance apparently directed by fugitive General Manuel Antonio Noriega.

Despite American hopes that Noriega would be quickly under the control of his new U.S.-installed government, fighting picked up on the fourth day of the invasion, with a U.S. embassy official saying there was considerable gunfire near the embassy.

Defense Department officials said there was increased action by Noriega's paramilitary "Dignity Battalions," who fired small arms at U.S. troops and continued looting overnight in defiance of a curfew. American helicopter gunships were in the air much of the night, officials said.

General Maxwell Thurman, the commander of U.S. forces, said opposition to the American invasion was "organised, not disorganised" and that Noriega was the "guiding hand" of the anti-American operation.

There were growing casualties from the United States biggest military operation overseas since the Vietnam war.

Pentagon officials said 21 U.S. servicemen and two since the fighting began early Wednesday. Another 222 were wounded and two were missing. The officials said 139 Noriega loyalists from the Panama Defence Force, the country's regular

army, had been killed, 95 wounded and 1,880 captured.

The two main hospitals in Panama City reported a total of 51 Panamanian civilians killed and 835 wounded, but the toll was believed to be much higher.

Noriega's representative to the United Nations said there had been as many as 7,000 deaths.

Panama City, a capital of one million people, was also facing a growing refugee problem, food shortages and lack of medical supplies for the hard-pressed civilian hospitals.

In a bid to ease the food problems, the military opened the Bridge of the Americas, a key transport route into the city from the countryside where farms are located.

U.S. President George Bush said Thursday that "Operation Just Cause" was pretty much wrapped up" and General Colin Powell, head of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, had said Wednesday organised opposition had been defeated and troops were mopping up.

But for many Panamanians their words were hard to accept. On Friday afternoon and early Saturday U.S. troops faced renewed attacks from what Thurman said was a "centrally controlled" opposition.

One U.S. Marine said, "This looks a little bit more than mopping up. Hell, this is rock 'n' roll."

The hunt for Noriega, wanted in the United States on drug trafficking charges, continued to



Residents looting stores in downtown Panama City before U.S. military police were deployed to restore law and order

turn up many reported sighting but no confirmations despite a million-dollar U.S. reward for information leading to his capture.

One resident said she only had enough food until Monday and the shortages were compounded by the city's near-state of anarchy.

One doctor told Reuters he and several staff members in one hospital had to leave their work patching up the wounded to search for food. Supermarkets were gutted and rotted food festered in the streets in 90 degree heat.

In the sprawling working-class suburb of San Miguelito residents reported that looters, having cleaned out all the stores, were breaking into homes.

She said many of the looters appeared to be members of the "Dignity Battalions," who were armed and bent on stealing as

much as they could before the Americans were able to gain control.

The Panamanian woman, who asked not to be named, said an American tank had rolled into her neighbourhood Saturday morning and was greeted with loud cheers from residents.

"We want the Americans in San Miguelito, we need them, everybody here wants them," she said.

The fresh troops were being sent to reinforce the U.S. strike force of 9,500, which earlier joined 13,000 troops stationed in Panama.

Thurman said the "Dignity Battalions" — or dingbats, as U.S. soldiers and reporters are rapidly learning from the locals to call them — had "created a significant amount of mischief."

Thurman estimated there were currently about half a dozen "Dignity Battalion" units of ab-

out 300 people each.

The Dignity Battalions were drawn largely from working class neighbourhoods that support Noriega. Thurman described them as arising from a "substantial arming of the population in a terrorist-type organisation."

Observers also said many members of the PDF had changed to civilian clothing and joined the "Dignity Battalions," helping the paramilitary forces with organisation and strategy.

Thurman said that in Colon, Panama's second city, the PDF unit had given up and turned in about 100 people and almost 1,000 weapons.

The military Saturday broadcast an appeal setting various prices for weapons turned in, offering prices ranging from \$25 for a single hand grenade to \$5,000 for an arms cache. Officials said they had already confiscated 13,000 weapons.

Mubarak, Assad to meet soon

CAIRO (Agencies) — A top-level Syrian envoy said Saturday the presidents of Egypt and Syria would meet very soon to put the seal on a "comprehensive" bilateral reconciliation after a 12-year rift.

The emissary, Vice-President Abdul Halim Khaddam, strongly indicated after talks with President Hosni Mubarak that the patchwork would include resuming diplomatic relations.

Khaddam, the highest Syrian official in Egypt since 1977, arrived Saturday with what he termed "a message of amity and brotherhood" from President Hafez Al Assad to the Egyptian leader.

"The coming meeting between the two presidents will lead to practical and concrete results in rectifying the status of Egyptian-Syrian relations," Khaddam told reporters after conferring privately with Mubarak.

Asked specifically whether the summit outcome would include restoration of diplomatic links, Khaddam said: "When we speak about rectifying the status of relations, we mean a comprehensive approach, not a narrow one."

"We are confident that comprehensive relations in the various fields will be rectified after the meeting."

An Egyptian minister, asked if Khaddam's comments meant the restoration of diplomatic ties, said: "Yes, that is understood from what he just said." The

minister declined to be named. Syria and Libya are the only two Arab countries yet to restore diplomatic ties with Egypt, broken after its 1979 treaty with Israel.

But relations have been improving slowly with Tripoli and Damascus since Egypt was readmitted to the Arab League in May.

Air links between Cairo and Damascus were resumed 10 days ago and soon afterwards Mubarak sent a special envoy to Syria.

At a meeting of European and Arab foreign ministers in Paris this week, Egypt boosted its standing with Damascus and Tripoli by urging the European Community to lift economic sanctions against Libya and Syria.

Khaddam spoke to reporters at Cairo international airport about historic ties between Egypt and Syria, referring to their merger between 1958 and 1961. He described the rift since 1977 as "a passing cloud."

"This eventful record full of shared hopes, blood, tears and aspirations is something that distinguishes the relations between the two countries," he said.

"In the past Egypt and Syria shouldered the main burden of defence of the Arab World, and they must resume their march in doing this. ... Rectifying the course of relations between the two countries necessarily will rectify the entire Arab situation."

Fahd in Bahrain in bid to mediate dispute

BAHRAIN (Agencies) — King Fahd of Saudi Arabia arrived Saturday from Oman, where he and Sultan Qaboos agreed on a border demarcation, apparently to help settle another border dispute between Bahrain and Qatar.

The emir of Bahrain, Sheikh Isa Ben Salman Al Khalifa, greeted the monarch at Bahrain airport.

Officially, Fahd's visit has been described as private. But Kuwait's Al Anbaa daily reported he would fly to Qatar from Bahrain later in a fresh bid to mediate a settlement to the long-running dispute over sovereignty of the Huwar Islands.

The dispute dates from British colonial days before Bahrain and Qatar became full-fledged states. It flared in April 1986, when Qatari forces detained a group of foreign workers building a radar station on the Fasht Al Dibal reef, midway between Bahrain and Qatar.

Qatar has wanted to take the dispute to the International Court and diplomatic sources said that Bahrain at one point threatened to lay claim to the Zubair region in northern Qatar if the Qatari insisted on claiming Huwar at the Hague.

Amal, Hizbollah lock horns again in South Lebanon

SIDON (Agencies) — Rival Shi'ite Muslim militias backed by Syria and Iran battled with tanks and artillery in South Lebanon Saturday and police reported at least 15 people killed and 40 wounded.

They said most of the casualties were from the Syrian-backed Amal faction, but could not give a specific breakdown.

Amal's rival, the pro-Iranian fundamentalist Hizbollah (Party of God), appeared to have the upper hand in the fighting that began before dawn north of Sidon, 40 kilometres south of Beirut.

It was the latest eruption in a two-year-old power struggle between Amal and Hizbollah for control of Lebanon's 1.2 million Shi'ites, the country's largest sect.

One spokesman, who cannot be named in line with standing regulations, said Hizbollah fighters chased Amal militiamen out of two villages — and Jbna and 'Ain Bouswar — in a pre-dawn assault.

After daybreak, they were inching towards 'Ain Kana and Arab Salim, two other Amal strongholds, behind a massive barrage of rocket and mortar fire.

Hundreds of villagers were seen fleeing from the region toward Sidon, the spokesman said.

He said police has no idea what sparked the fighting, which torpedoed a truce mediated by Syria and Iran which halted similar gunbattles last month.

But he said Hizbollah, which can field up to 4,000 hardcore guerrillas, has massed some 1,500 fighters in the region. Amal, a 6,000-strong militia, was rushing reinforcements from Beirut.

By police count, 571 people have been killed and 1,579 wounded in previous Amal-Hizbollah clashes that have raged intermittently since April 1988. Witnesses said several houses

were burning. They said the sound of exploding shells thundered across the area.

Fears of a military flare-up rose last week after the two groups massed troops in Iqlim Al Tufah, 40 kilometres south of Beirut. The area stretches from the port of Sidon to Israel's self-declared "security zone" in South Lebanon.

Each blamed the other for the latest outbreak.

An Amal spokesman said the fighting erupted after Hizbollah launched a dawn assault on Amal positions in the town of Jubah. He said Amal repulsed the assault and captured many of the attackers.

Hizbollah sources in the south said their forces seized two Amal-held villages but Amal denied the report.

Political sources linked the latest outbreak to Amal's refusal to allow Hizbollah free movement in South Lebanon from where Hizbollah was driven in 1988 after a month of battles with Amal.



INTIFADA: Palestinian youths seen throwing stones and using slingshots to attack Israeli troops in the village of Jabal Mukaber, occupied Jerusalem. The troops used bullets and tear gas to break up a protest demonstration against Israeli policies in occupied territories.

Turkey hope for EC entry despite shelving of bid

ANKARA (R) — Turkey has put a brave face on its failure to win full European Community (EC) membership although opposition parties called the decision an indictment of the government.

"The report is registering that Turkey could be a full member. Turkey is not rejected. The report is better than our predictions," President Turgut Ozal, who submitted the application as prime minister in 1987, told Turkish reporters.

The European Commission said Monday that Turkey would have to wait until 1993 before the 12-nation EC considered its application. But it offered Ankara closer economic and political ties.

"The report is not negative. It sets guidelines for Turkey to meet

in three to four years that will put it in a much stronger position," a senior source close to EC affairs said.

Lurking behind official optimism is a fear that Turkey, an associate EC member since 1963, may be sidelined by the EC as East-West barriers crumble and that its NATO role, a foreign policy keystone, might be diminished.

"The real question is whether Turkey can eliminate differences between its state of development and levels that exist in the EC within 20 years," a Western diplomat said.

"If it stays like it is now, and little has been done in the past two years on human rights and democracy, then membership is

out of the question," he said.

Officials said the message from Brussels was clear. Turkey had to improve its human rights image and an economy saddled with 75 per cent annual inflation and lift clamps, especially on trade unions, imposed during 1980-83 army rule.

Political opposition parties, used the report to lash out at Turkey's centre-right government, formerly led by Ozal.

"The report is utterly negative and with this negativity our government shoulders a great responsibility," Erdal Inonu, leader of the Social Democrat Populist Party, told reporters.

Suleyman Demirel, leader of the centre-right True Path Party, said: "The government made this subject a tool for dynamic politics. Now they are left outside the door."

Hasan Cemal, editor of the left-leaning daily Cumhuriyet, wrote: "The commission's response is negative but they have not slammed the door yet... A Turkey that fully implements human rights and democracy cannot be overlooked."

Diplomats said the report was carefully worded in an effort not to offend Turkey, which borders the Soviet Union, Bulgaria, Iran, Iraq and Syria as well as Greece.

"The fact that Turkey is regarded as European by the EC is not in question. That is taken for granted with the associate membership agreement."

Members of some EC states privately question whether the EC will ever allow Turkey, a mainly Muslim but secular state linking Europe and Asia, to join the Community.

Apart from citing human rights and a tarnished democratic image after three army coups between 1960 and 1980, they point to the size of the country — 55 million people expanding at 2.5 per cent annually with nearly 20 per cent unemployment.

"When we become a full member if there are still difficulties about migration of labour we will be able to solve them in a reasonable period," an official Turkish source said.

"When we are a member we will have an economy on a reasonable level so I can't see any Turks wanting to find jobs abroad," he added.

Reflecting concern that Christian Europe has little time for Muslim Turkey, the conservative Islamic daily Turkiye wrote about the EC report under the headline: "Crusader mentality in the EC."

Iraq says Iran seized 3 soldiers

BAGHDAD (R) — Iraq said Saturday that Iran had seized three of its soldiers along their border and expressed concern at deaths among Iraqi prisoners of war (PoWs) in Iranian camps.

The unarmed soldiers were abducted in no-man's-land Dec-14 as they tried to fetch water from a spring, 250 metres from their own positions and a kilometre from Iran's frontline, the official Iraqi News Agency (INA) said.

It said Baghdad had protested to U.N. Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar.

Iraq and Iran have regularly accused each other of violating a ceasefire that began in August last year after eight years of conflict. Peace talks held since have stalled.

GCC aide: calls for a united Arab Nation ridiculous

ABU DHABI (R) — A senior Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) official was quoted Saturday as saying that repeated calls for a united Arab Nation were ridiculous.

"Previous experiences of attempts at Arab unity make present calls for unity look ridiculous and they annoy the average Arab citizen," Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs, Said Ben Hasheh Al Maskari, said.

Maskari, quoted by the United Arab Emirates paper Al Khaleej, said the six-nation GCC was based upon mutual cooperation with no loss of sovereignty.

The GCC, founded in 1981, is the oldest regional group. Jordan, Egypt, Iraq, and North Yemen formed the Arab Cooperation Council this year and five Arab states in North Africa established their own separate economic union.

Euro-Arab dialogue ends with all eyes on Eastern Europe

PARIS (Agencies) — The European Community (EC) promised Arab leaders at a meeting of their foreign ministers Friday that the dramatic events in Eastern Europe would not overshadow their links with the Arab World.

Even Syria and Libya attended despite the fact that sanctions imposed against them by the EC in 1986 are still in force.

They were set because of alleged Syrian and Libyan involvement in political violence in Western Europe, but France said Friday the EC would review the measures.

The main practical outcome of the conference was an agreement to formalise annual meetings between three foreign ministers from each side.

French Foreign Minister Roland Dumas said the delegations gained "an extremely positive impression" of their prospects for cooperation on issues like cultural relations, promotion and protection of investments, petrochemical cooperation and youth.

Delegates from the EC and the 22-member Arab League agreed to prioritise these issues in order of those likely to yield the quickest results.

Mitterrand assured the closing session that the "bringing together of the two parts of Europe, too long separated, will not be done at the expense of the solidarities and links of all kinds which have long existed between the 12 community members and their Arab and African neighbours."

The Arab states tried Friday to draw the attention of the meeting to political issues but these were put aside by the European countries as beyond the scope of the meeting.

The American invasion of Panama and the overthrow of Ceausescu put purely Arab-European issues on the back burner as the EC ministers produced declarations concerning emergency aid to both countries.

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| 19:30 | News in Hebrew |
| 19:45 | Varities programme |
| 20:00 | News in Arabic |
| 20:10 | Charles in Charge |
| 21:10 | The Struggle for Democracy |
| 22:00 | News in English |
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| PRAYER TIMES | |
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| 06:29 | Sunrise (Shurub) Duha |
| 11:35 | Dhuhr |

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

| 14:19 | 'Aar |
|---|------------------------------|
| 16:42 | Maghrib |
| 18:05 | 'Isha |
| CHURCHES | |
| St. Mary of Nazareth Church Sweifeth, Tel. 810740 | |
| Assemblies of God Church, Tel. 632785 | |
| St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590 | |
| Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440 | |
| De la Salle Church Tel. 661757 | |
| Teressanta Church Tel. 622366 | |
| Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541 | |
| Anglican Church Tel. 625383, Tel. 628543 | |
| Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331 | |
| Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 772661 | |
| St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751 | |
| Amman International Church Tel. 685326 | |
| Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 811295 | |
| The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Tel. 815817 and 654932 | |
| WEATHER | |
| Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology. | |
| Temperatures will be above the annual average and winds will be light and variable. In Aqaba, winds will be northerly moderate and seas calm. | |
| Amman | Mia./max. temp. 2 / 17 |
| Aqaba | 8 / 21 |
| Deserts | - 1 / 18 |
| Jordan Valley | 6 / 21 |
| Yerday's high temperatures: Amman 19, Aqaba 21. Humidity readings: Amman 23 per cent, Aqaba 34 per cent. | |
| USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS | |
| NIGHT DUTY | |
| AMMAN: | |
| Dr. Saeed Abu Hatab | 649846 |
| Dr. Mohammad Al 'Abdadi | 778999 |
| Dr. Tayssar Al-Sa'idi | 776636 |
| Dr. Issam Maraga | 776066 |
| First pharmacy | 661912 |
| Ferdows pharmacy | 778336 |
| Al Asena pharmacy | 637055 |
| Nitroukh pharmacy | 623672 |
| Al Salan pharmacy | 636730 |
| Yacoub pharmacy | 644945 |
| Shoneisani pharmacy | 637660 |
| IRBID: | |
| Dr. Amjad Obesidat | (---) |
| Al Sharras' pharmacy | (985238) |
| ZARQA: | |
| Dr. Ghaleb Abu 'Eida | 955430 |
| Khalidif pharmacy | 985417 |
| EMERGENCIES | |
| Civil Defenot Department | 661111 |
| Civil Defence Immediate | |
| Rescue | 630341 |
| Civil Defence Emergency | 199 |
| Rescue Police | 192, 621111, 637777 |
| Fire Brigade | 891228 |
| Blood Bank | 775121 |
| Highway Police | 843402 |
| Traffic Police | 896390 |
| Public Security Department | 63021 |
| Hotel Complaints | 605800 |
| Price Complaints | 661176 |
| Water and Sewerage | 877297 |
| Complaints | 877467 |
| Amman Municipality | |
| Complaints | 787111 |
| Telephone Information | 121 |
| (directory assistance) | 121 |
| Overseas Calls | 010230 |
| Central Amman Telephone | |
| Reception | 623101 |
| Abdali Telephone Repair | 691101 |
| Jordan Television | 773111 |
| Radio Jordan | 774111 |
| Radio Authority | 660100 |
| Greek Catholic Hospital | 815615 |
| Electric Power | 636381 |
| Company | |
| RJ Flight Information | 08-53200 |
| Queen Alia Intl. Airport | 08-53200 |
| HOSPITALS | |
| AMMAN: | |
| Husseini Medical Centre | 813813/32 |
| Khalidi Maternity, J. Amn. | 6442816 |
| Alshai Maternity, J. Amn. | 6424412 |
| Jabal Amman Maternity | 643562 |
| Malhas, J. Amman | 636140 |
| Palestine, Shmeisani | 6641714 |
| Shmeisani Hospital | 669131 |
| University Hospital | 685845 |
| St. Michael's Hospital | 6872219 |
| The Islamic Hospital | 6627297 |
| Al-Ahli, Abdali | 6641616 |
| Italian, Al-Muhajreen | 7771013 |
| Al-Bashir, J. Ashrafieh | 7751126 |
| Arny, Marika | 8916115 |
| Queen Alia Hospital | 60224985 |
| Aqaba Hospital | 674155 |
| ZARQA: | |
| Govt. Hospital | (09)983323 |
| Zarqa National Hospital | (09)99107 |
| Rbn Shina Hospital | (09)985732 |
| IRBID: | |
| Princess Basma Hospital | (02)275555 |
| Greek Catholic Hospital | (02)272275 |
| Rbn Al Nafies Hospital | (02)547100 |
| AQABA: | |
| Princess Haya Hospital | (03)314111 |
| FOR THE TRAVELLER | |
| QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT | |
| This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (08)53200-5, where it should always be verified. | |
| ARRIVALS | |
| Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1) | |
| 09:10 | Kuwait (RJ) |
| 09:45 | Abu Dhabi, Dubai (RJ) |
| 09:25 | Doha, Bahrain (RJ) |
| 10:30 | Jeddah, Aqaba (RJ) |
| 17:00 | New York, Amsterdam (RJ) |
| 17:20 | Paris (RJ) |
| 17:30 | Chicago, Vienna (RJ) |
| 18:15 | Cairo (RJ) |
| 17:45 | Madrid, Geneva (RJ) |
| 17:55 | Brussels, Frankfurt (RJ) |
| 18:00 | London (RJ) |
| 19:45 | Rome (RJ) |
| Other Flights (Terminal 2) | |
| 08:05 | Dubai (AZ) |
| 10:30 | Cairo (MS) |
| 10:30 | Kuwait (RJ) |
| 15:45 | Tripoli (LN) |
| 16:35 | Athens (OA) |
| 18:25 | Frankfurt (LH) |
| 19:35 | Beirut (ME) |
| 08:35 | London (BA) |
| DEPARTURES | |
| Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1) | |
| 10:45 | Rome (RJ) |
| 11:20 | Tunis, Casablanca (RJ) |
| 12:45 | Isabell, Vienna (RJ) |
| 12:45 | Aqaba, Cairo (RJ) |
| 15:40 | Doha, Bahrain (RJ) |
| 20:00 | Larnaca (RJ) |
| 21:15 | Baghdad (RJ) |
| 28:20 | Cairo (RJ) |
| 28:45 | Abu Dhabi, Dubai (RJ) |
| 21:15 | Seaan (RJ) |
| 21:15 | Damascus (RJ) |
| 21:30 | Calcutta, Bangkok (RJ) |
| 21:30 | Kuala Lumpur, Singapore (RJ) |
| Other Flights (Terminal 2) | |
| 09:00 | Damascus, Paris (AF) |
| 09:30 | Rome (MS) |
| 10:35 | Cairo (MS) |
| 11:30 | Kuwait (RJ) |
| 16:45 | Kuwait (LN) |
| 17:20 | Athens (OA) |
| 20:25 | Seaan (JA) |
| MARKET PRICES | |
| Upperflower price in lbs per kg | |
| Apple | 625 / 580 |
| Banana | 450 / 400 |
| Banana (Mukammur) | 400 / 350 |
| Beans | 330 / 295 |
| Cabbage | 220 / 185 |
| Carry | 220 / 185 |
| Cauliflower | 175 / 120 |
| Cucumbers (large) | 220 / 200 |
| Cucumbers (small) | 500 / 420 |
| Dates | 500 / 400 |
| Eggplant | 160 / 120 |
| Garlic | 850 / 750 |
| Grassini | 250 / 200 |
| Lemon | 210 / 180 |
| Marrow (large) | 130 / 80 |
| Marrow (small) | 220 / 200 |
| Onion (dry) | 250 / 200 |
| Onion (green) | 180 / 120 |
| Orange | 210 / 145 |
| Orange (Shamoud) | 220 / 175 |
| Pepper (hot) | 220 / 175 |
| Pepper (sweet) | 220 / 175 |
| Potato | 220 / 175 |
| Radish | 140 / 120 |
| Sage | 200 / 175 |
| Squash | 200 / 175 |
| Tomato | 200 / 175 |

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

and variable. In Aqaba, winds will be northerly moderate and seas calm.

AMMAN
Min./max. temp.
2 / 17
Agaba 8 / 21
Deserts -1 / 18
Jordan Valley 6 / 21

Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 19, Agaba 21. Humidity readings: Amman 23 per cent, Agaba 34 per cent.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:
Dr. Saeed Abu Hatab 649846
Dr. Mohammad Al'Aboud 778999
Dr. Tayseer Al Sa'di 777636
Dr. Jamil Maraga 776046
Firas pharmacy 661912
Ferdows pharmacy 778336
Al Asena pharmacy 637055
Nidroski pharmacy 636272
Al Salam pharmacy 636730
Yacoub pharmacy 644945
Shmeisani pharmacy 637660

IRBID:
Dr. Amjad Obeidat (—)
Al Sharaa' pharmacy (985236)

ZARQA:
Dr. Ghaleb Abu 'Eida 995430
Khalifeh pharmacy 985417

EMERGENCIES

Civil Defence Department 661111
Civil Defence Immediate 630341
Rescue 630341
Civil Defence Emergency 199
Rescue Police 192, 621111, 637777
Fire Brigade 801228
Blood Bank 775121
Highway Police 843402
Traffic Police 896390
Public Security Department 630321
Hotel Complaints 605800
Price Complaints 661176
Water and Sewerage 897467
Complaints 787111
Amman Municipality 787111
Telephone Information (directory assistance) 121
Overseas Calls 010230

CENTRAL AMMAN TELEPHONE

Repair 623101
Abdali Telephone Repairs 661101
Jordan Television 773111
Radio Jordan 774111
Water Authority 680100
Jordan Electricity Authority 815615
Electric Power Company 636381
RJ Flight Information 08-53200
Queen Alia Intl. Airport 08-53200

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:
Husseini Medical Centre 81381302
Khaldi Maternity J. Amn 6442816
Abdel Maternity J. Amn 6424412
Jabal Amman Maternity 642362
Malhas J. Amman 636140
Palestine Shmeisani 66417114
Shmeisani Hospital 669131
University Hospital 845945
Al-Musaber Hospital 6672279
The Islamic, Abdali 66612787
Al-Abli, Abdali 6641646
Italian, Al-Muhajireen 7710103
Al-Bashir J. Abdali 7511126
Army, Marka 89161115
Queen Alia Hospital 60224050
Amal Hospital 674155

ZARQA:
Zarqa Govt. Hospital (09)983323
Zarqa National Hospital (09)91071
Rn Sima Hospital (09)966732

IRBID:
Princess Basma Hospital (02)275555
Greek Catholic Hospital (02)272275
Rn Al Nafesa Hospital (02)347100

AQABA:
Princess Haya Hospital (03)314111

FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (05)53200-5, where it should always be verified.

ARRIVALS
Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)
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09:45 Abu Dhabi, Dubai (RJ)
09:55 Doha, Bahrain (RJ)
10:30 Jeddah, Aqaba (RJ)

17:00 New York, Amsterdam (RJ)
17:20 Paris (RJ)
17:30 Chicago, Vienna (RJ)
17:40 Cairo (RJ)
17:45 Madrid, Geneva (RJ)
17:55 Brussels, Frankfurt (RJ)
18:00 London (RJ)
19:45 Rome (RJ)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

06:35 Dubai (AZ)
06:55 Cairo (MS)
07:00 Kuwait (KU)
07:45 Tripoli (LN)
08:35 Athens (OA)
08:45 Frankfurt (LH)
09:25 Beirut (ME)
09:35 London (BA)

DEPARTURES
Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)
16:45 Rome (RJ)
17:20 Tunis, Casablanca (RJ)
17:30 Athens, Vienna (RJ)
17:40 Agaba, Cairo (RJ)
17:45 Kuwait, Dhahran (RJ)
18:00 Laraca (RJ)
18:20 Baghdad (RJ)
18:45 Cairo (RJ)
18:55 Abu Dhabi, Dubai (RJ)
19:15 Sanaa (RJ)
19:25 Damascus (RJ)
19:45 Calcutta, Bangkok (RJ)
21:30 Kuala Lumpur, Singapore (RJ)

MARKET PRICES

Upper/lower price in lbs per kg

Apple 230/300
Banana 450/400
Banana (Mukannam) 400/350
Beans 230/225
Cabbage 120/110
Carrot 220/180
Cauliflower 170/120
Cucumbers (large) 250/200
Cucumbers (small) 300/250
Dates 380/430
Eggplant 160/120
Garlic 550/750
Grapefruit 130/120
Lemon 210/160
Marrow (large) 130/100
Marrow (small) 120/90
Onion (dry) 220/180
Onion (green) 180/120
Orange 110/120
Oranges (Shamouti) 200/180
Pepper (hot) 280/220
Pepper (sweet) 220/180
Potato 140/120
Radish 140/120
Sage 300/250
Spinach 250/200
Tomatoes 200/150

Badran, Kuwait fund head review links

AMMAN (Petra) — Prime Minister Mudar Badran Saturday reviewed in his office Bader Humeidi, director of the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development (KFAED) in the presence of Minister of Planning Awad Al Masri.

Badran and Humeidi reviewed cooperation between the fund and Jordan. Badran paid tribute to the fund for its assistance towards promoting development in the Arab World and Humeidi lauded Jordan's efforts to benefit from the fund's loans in executing important projects.

Humeidi also held a meeting with Minister of Energy and Mineral Resources Thabet Al

Taber with whom he discussed cooperation (see story on page 6).

Discussion during the meeting covered the prospect of KFAED employing experts employed by the Jordan Electricity Authority (JEA) to help conduct feasibility studies on power projects financed by the fund in the Arab World.

The minister thanked the fund for its contribution towards implementing Jordan's projects, specially those related to energy and mineral exploitation.

The KFAED financed the Al Hussein Thermal Power Station in Aqaba and other JEA power projects in Jordan.

Qasem returns

AMMAN (Petra) — Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Marwan Al Qasem Saturday returned home after representing Jordan at an Arab-European ministerial conference, which convened in Paris at the initiative of French President Francois Mitterrand.

The conference adopted a number of measures to reorganise Arab-European dialogue and reactivate several cooperation projects such as holding a symposium on Arab-European cultural relations in Jordan.

Deputies to begin debate on laws, amendments

AMMAN (Petra) — The Lower House of Parliament meets Sunday to elect members of its committees in charge of public freedoms, citizens' rights, agricultural affairs, health, environment safety, education, Palestine and the occupied Arab territories as well as rural and badia affairs.

A statement Saturday said that the House members would receive Sunday a total of 57 draft laws or amendments to existing laws from the government to be reviewed by the concerned House committees.

Among these are laws on supply, the Jordan Investment Corporation, the value of added tax, as well as amendments to the Income Tax Law, the Higher Court of Justice and the Election Law.

The statement said that reports to the government by the Central Audit Bureau for 1987 and 1988 will also be referred to the Parliament last week.

Ministry shows how to conserve energy

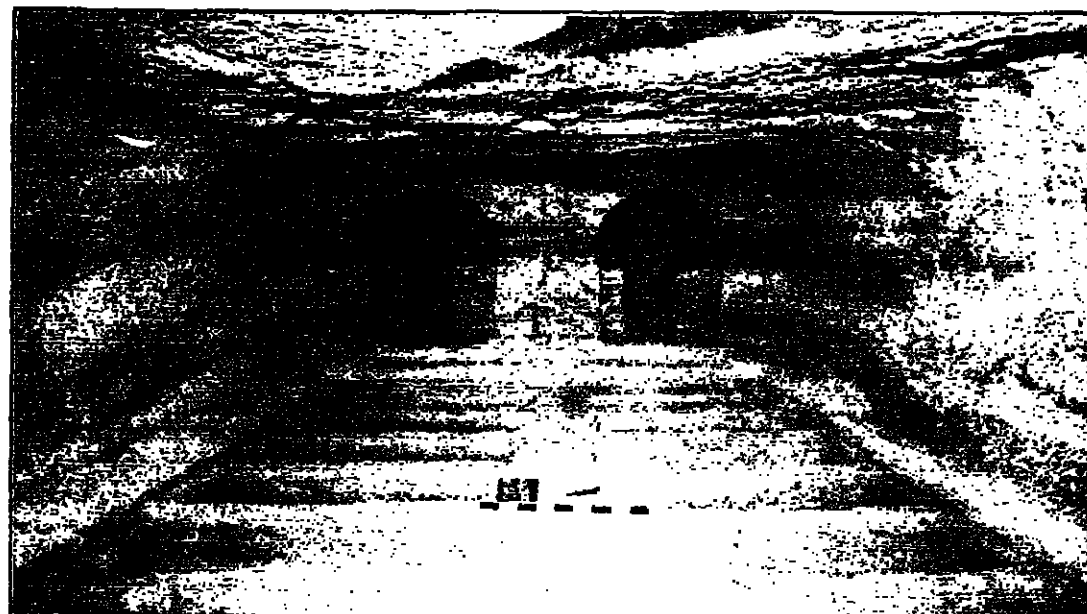
AMMAN (J.T.) — The Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources has announced the start of a programme that will demonstrate actual savings in energy costs that participating industries can achieve through energy conservation. Energy audits have indicated that energy consumption could potentially be reduced by 10 per cent to 25 per cent, thus reducing the cost of production and demand for additional power.

In addition to the energy cost savings benefits, energy conservation results in reduction in the global warming effect because of more efficient fuel utilisation and less carbon dioxide emission to the environment.

In cooperation with the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources is undertaking a project to demonstrate the feasibility

of reducing energy use through the implementation of efficiency and energy conservation programme. The ministry, working with a local engineering firm, will select several local industries interested in energy conservation to participate in the project. Energy-saving equipment will be installed, and results monitored and publicised to both the general public and to appropriate businesses.

The cost of energy saving activities compared with cost savings — higher profits — realised as a result of energy conservation are of particular interest. If energy conservation results in a 10 per cent reduction in the cost of production as projected, the project will demonstrate that conserving energy is a profitable investment for Jordanian businesses. Results of the study will be available in nine months.



A burial chamber unearthed by excavators at Yasileh in northern Jordan (Petra photo)

Byzantine ruins unearthed

IRBID (J.T.) — Archaeological excavations conducted by the Institute of Archaeology and Anthropology of Yarmouk University, in cooperation with the Department of Antiquities, at Yasileh in northern Jordan have revealed burial chambers, store rooms and water cisterns dating back to the Byzantine era, according to Dr. Zeidoun Al Muheisen of the institute.

Muheisen said in a lecture Saturday that at least 30 burial chambers were unearthed in the latest excavation season along with courtyards and coins as well as the remains of a church.

Coins found in the soil and chambers suggest a continuous period of civilisation under the Romans and Byzantines, followed by the Islamic period. He said important hydraulic installations for collecting run off waters from the wadis were also located at the site. He added that a spring located one kilometre to the north of the Yasileh site was used for water supply in the two periods. Muheisen said the excavation was launched primarily to determine the exact location of the ancient city where Yasileh now stands.

ACC meeting designed to bolster trade

BAGHDAD (Petra) — Minister of Industry and Trade Ziyad Fariz has said that a two-day meeting in Baghdad of the ministers of economy, trade and supply in the Arab Cooperation Council (ACC) countries is designed to bolster ACC activities and discuss executive measures related to the implementation of the cooperation agreement, dealing with regulation of trade and increasing the size of trade among ACC countries.

"The meeting will bolster executive methods related to increasing the size of trade exchange... encourage exports and discuss means to organise imports of strategic commodities so as to boost the balance of payment and strengthen the economy," Fariz added.

During their meetings, which began Saturday, the ACC ministers will discuss a report prepared by economic experts in the ACC countries. The report includes recommendations on means to put into effect articles related to trade included in an economic cooperation agreement the ACC leaders had signed in San'a, North Yemen.

Attending the Baghdad meeting were ACC Assistant Secretary-General Hisham Hassan Tawfiq and the ambassadors of Jordan, Egypt, and North Yemen in Baghdad.

Youth forum opens week-long meeting

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Amman-based Arab Youth Forum (AYF) Saturday opened a week-long meeting by representatives of youths from the four-member states of the Arab Cooperation Council (ACC) to discuss issues of concern to Arab youth in general and those of the ACC states in particular.

Minister of Culture Khaled Karaki, addressing the opening session held at the Royal Cultural Centre in Amman, urged the gathering to take decisions aimed at promoting contacts among youth of the Arab World and help fulfil AYF goals.

The meeting was also addressed by Abdullah Hijazi, chairman of a committee that prepared for the meeting, and Omar Ali Babekr, member of the forum. Both emphasised the need to promote youth's participation in

various social and economic affairs.

Besides their meetings, the participants will hear lectures and tour several places of interest and youth centres in Jordan. They will also take part in a seminar that will review working papers on the role of the Arab youth in development.

AYF was established in June 1988 with His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan as its chairman.

Prince Hassan told the opening meeting that the AYF came into being in response to the desires of various youth sectors in Jordan including people studying at Jordanian universities and with the purpose of expanding the framework of dialogue and discussing national issues and pan-Arab problems.

Study sheds light on begging, homelessness

AMMAN (Petra) — A study prepared by the Ministry of Social Development, in cooperation with the Kourad Adenauer Foundation of West Germany, describes begging and homelessness in Jordan as a chronic problem that should be dealt with at the national level.

Details of the study were discussed at a general meeting organised Saturday by the Ministry of Social Development. Ministry officials said the study was conducted with a view to discovering the causes of the two problems and to come up with proposals and recommendations for solutions.

According to the study, 731 cases of beggars in Jordan were

processed and 634 homeless persons were picked up from the streets in 1988. It said only 45 of the homeless persons last year have been referred to private charitable and philanthropic organisation to provide them with care.

The study recommended protective measures to be taken by the ministry to stem any increases in the number of homeless people and beggars. The study said the problem had serious implications for society.

The study called for a re-examination of Jordan's child care programmes with a view to introducing measures that would eliminate homelessness and beggars

Thousands sit for Tawjihi today

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Ministry of Education announced Saturday that it had finalised preparations for the first session of the general secondary certificate (Tawjihi) examinations session, which is due to begin Sunday. It said that a total of 66,502 students will take the examination this year, up from nearly 60,000 in the last scholastic year, sitting for seven different streams.

He said that evaluation of answer papers would begin on the following day of each subject. The results normally appear soon after the re-opening of

schools after the scholastic year's winter holiday which began Saturday and will run until Jan. 11, 1990.

The same Tawjihi students will be required to sit for another examination session by June of the coming year, a procedure followed by the ministry over the past years. But, according to a recent ministry announcement, Tawjihi students will take only an end-of-the-year examination in 1992-1993 scholastic year and the following year.

GUVS endorses 1990 plan

AMMAN (J.T.) — The General Union of Voluntary Societies (GUVS) Saturday endorsed a plan of action for 1990 aimed at providing assistance to charitable and voluntary societies and maintaining programmes for the handicapped and needy, according to GUVS Secretary-General Mohammad Ali Wardam.

In a statement made after a general GUVS meeting where the plan was endorsed, Wardam said the main targets for 1990 include the Al Amal Centre for the severely handicapped at Yajouz, seven rehabilitation centres in different areas for handicapped children, mother and child care centres, and vocational training centres.

Work is underway at the Al Amal Home, a project expected to give care and rehabilitation services to 150 children aged between six and 20. Her Majesty Queen Noor laid the foundation stone for the centre at Yajouz last August. According to GUVS officials it is being set up on an eight dunum plot that would house facilities for the handicapped children at nominal cost.

Severely and multi-disabled children are currently being cared for by GUVS at a temporary centre located at Tla'a Al Abi District.

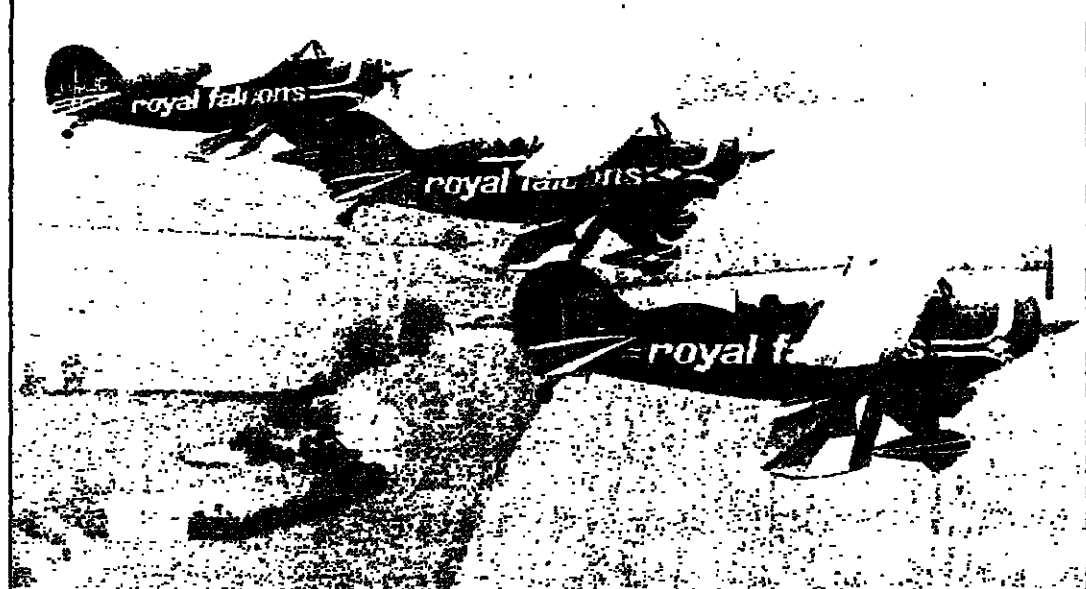
GUVS officials said the centre will provide special education services along with physiotherapy sessions to the handicapped on a permanent basis. They expect the centre to open its doors next year.

Wardam said in 1990 work on rehabilitation centres for the mentally disabled will begin in Irbid, Mafrag, Zarqa, Madaba, Sahab, Maan and Aqaba. Each of the centres will accommodate 40 handicapped children in the initial stage and they will be provided with special experts recruited by GUVS, he said.

Over the past two years, GUVS, in cooperation with the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), provided assistance totalling JD 100,000 for various charitable and voluntary societies in the Kingdom, Wardam said. In the coming year, GUVS will maintain such assistance and will offer loans to finance income-generating projects for needy families, especially in the rural areas of Jordan. GUVS will join hands with a number of regional and international organisations in providing loans to Jordanian citizens carrying out development projects, Wardam said.

He said that GUVS would provide assistance to handicapped persons by providing them with special vocational training courses to enable them to become self-supporting and will also help the handicapped find employment.

GUVS, established in 1958, incorporates over 450 voluntary and charitable societies in all parts of the Kingdom involving some 45,000 voluntary workers. Wardam did not disclose the amounts of money required for the 1990 projects but GUVS President Abdullah Al Khutib last August disclosed that nearly JD 1.4 million were needed annually. He said that more than 150,000 Jordanians benefit directly or indirectly from GUVS projects annually, including 500 students who obtain interest-free loans for their education.



Falcons to get one more wing

AMMAN (Petra) — The Royal Falcons, the national aerobatics team, will soon add at least one more plane to its fleet and will employ additional training staff and pilots from Royal Jordanian (RJ), Royal Falcons club acting Director Nidal Samaeen announced Saturday.

planes, four of which are used in air shows and the rest of training as well as air shows.

Samaeen said that his fleet took part in several air shows and that no less than 15 million people watched their aerobatic performances. The Royal Falcons, which was established in 1976 upon directives of His Majesty King Hussein, took part in shows

held in Arab countries as well as France, the United Kingdom, West Germany, Switzerland, the Netherlands, the United States, Canada and Indonesia.

He said that the Royal Falcons has received invitations to take part in air shows to be held in Spain and five other European nations.

He said the club now has eight

Bloodbath in Romania

(Continued from page 1)

abandon "this dangerous road" and urging them to "stop before it's too late."

The ousted leader had run the country as a personal fiefdom, installing dozens of relatives in key positions of power.

The Yugoslav state news agency Tanjug, quoting Romanian Radio, reported an orgy of blood-letting in Sibiu and Brasov by commandos of Ceausescu's feared police force.

"Commandos of the former securitate had captured a hospital in Brasov and were entering homes and flats and shooting at random," said the report, which, like others, could not immediately be confirmed independently.

Romanian radio said the heaviest fighting outside the capital occurred in Brasov, Romania's second-largest city. It appealed urgently for reinforcements to help the army there.

After his capture by the army, the head of state security, Iulian Vlad, went on Bucharest radio to call for unity and announced that the Interior Ministry had rid itself of "elements loyal to the Ceausescu clan." He also called on the security troops to join the uprising.

Bucharest radio reported that army units backing the revolt against Ceausescu had succeeded in arresting Interior Minister Tudor Postelnicu and two of his deputies.

NATIONAL NEWS IN BRIEF

TRIBES VISIT BADRAN: A delegation representing the tribes of Hwaitat and N'aimat visited Prime Minister Mudar Badran Saturday. The delegation congratulated Badran for forming the cabinet and expressed pride in His Majesty King Hussein's leadership. The prime minister expressed his gratitude to the delegation members and asked them to convey his good wishes to the sons of their tribes. (Petra)

COMMITTEE ON YARMOUK CLASHES: The University of Yarmouk Council has decided to form a committee from its members to complete investigations into the student clashes, which took place at the university recently. The council also entrusted the committee with providing the council with a report and recommendations as soon as possible. (J.T.)

GERMAN ART EXHIBITION: An art exhibition entitled the Blue Rider was opened Saturday at Yarmouk University. The exhibition, organised by the university in cooperation with the Goethe Institute, includes 36 paintings depicting social life in West Germany. (J.T.)

WHAT'S GOING ON

The following listings are compiled from monthly bulletins and the daily Arabic press. Readers are advised to verify the listed time and place with the concerned institutions.

EXHIBITIONS

- ★ An art exhibition by artists from Jordan and other Arab countries at Al Wasiti Gallery, Plaza Hotel.
- ★ The youths art exhibition at the Spanish Cultural Centre.
- ★ An exhibition entitled "The Blue Rider" at the Yarmouk University.
- ★ A plastic art exhibition by Arij Al Hammad and Ibrahim Nababneh at the University of Jordan.
- ★ An exhibition on public education at the Soviet Cultural Centre.
- ★ The Arab Cooperation Council (ACC) youths art exhibition at the Royal Cultural Centre.

FILM

- ★ A Soviet film entitled "The Puppet" at the Soviet Cultural Centre — 5:30 p.m.

WE'VE GOT YOUR PRIORITIES RIGHT.

AMRA HOTEL

Christmas Buffet

for Lunch & Dinner

Local and Traditional X'mas Specialities will be served at The Coffee Shop

Price: 9 J.D. Per Person
10% Tax & 10% service charge
Children half price

For Reservation 815071/1505

FORUM HOTELS

AMMAN PLAZA

Christmas Day Lunch

Enjoy our traditional christmas lunch buffet at the coffee shop with all christmas delights

Father Christmas will be there with lots of presents for our children

Entertainment will be by Rainbow Trio

هناك ألعاب للأطفال

Adults 7.500 J.D. Children 4.000 J.D.

Trusthouse Forte

A SELECTION OF TWENTY ARABIC AND CONTINENTAL SALADS AND PIZZA
SMOKED SALMON
COLD CUTS
CARVED IN THE ROOF
ROASTED TURKEY WITH TRADITIONAL STUFFING
WHOLE ROASTED LEG OF BEEF
HOT FROM BUFFET
FRESH RILL LABAN
FLEET OF HONEY
CHERRY BARTLETT
ROAST POTATOES
CARROT VEGETABLES
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Jordan Times

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Sunday Economic Pulse

Income, consumption taxes at the expense of imports duty

By Dr. Fahed Fanek

FOR quite a long time, the Treasury was dependent on customs duty on imports as its main source of domestic revenue. The justifications for such a state of affairs were: Simplicity of collection at border points, very high proceeds, and protection of local industry.

However, the new government programme submitted last week to Parliament for a vote of confidence admitted that customs duty on imports, as an indirect tax, will retreat substantially in favour of direct taxes such as income tax and other newly introduced consumption tax.

This strategic shift in the fiscal policy is worth some analysis. A hasty observer may think that it is not more than an arbitrary decision, made by the present minister of finance, that would be offset in the future by another arbitrary decision in the opposite direction.

In this respect it is worthwhile to look into the situation in other advanced countries to read the trend. Treasuries in industrialised and newly industrialised countries depend heavily on one main direct tax, income tax. People have to set aside a portion of their current income, be it salary, profit, interest of rent, to finance the government that provides external and internal security, justice, organisation and other services and functions of governments.

Income tax of course is not desired by those who pay it, simply because it is seen and felt, and is represented by a cash transfer to a tax man who does not give in return any service directly related to the amount paid. However, it is, or at least it could be, a just and fair tax, because it is proportional to the ability to pay. It allows acceleration with higher income, and it gives the citizen the feeling of a taxpayer who has the right to have the government accountable.

On the other hand, the high customs duty and the exaggerated protection of domestic products are guaranteed prescriptions for consumer exploitation, inefficiency, high cost of production, loss of productivity, and lack of competitiveness in the export markets. It is not a coincidence that most Jordanian exports are those which do not benefit from customs protection, such as phosphate, potash, fertilisers, fruits, vegetables and other food-stuffs.

We should also take note of the radical change in prevailing circumstances. The dependency on customs duty may be acceptable and natural in a country that depends heavily or solely on importation. In that case it is virtually a consumption tax. But, when dependency on imports is reduced to a bare minimum, the Treasury's dependency on customs duty has to be reduced too. It

is not a coincidence that the proceeds of customs duty in 1989 dropped by 15 per cent in terms of current Jordan dinars, which means a sharp decline of over 40 per cent in real terms measured by purchasing power. The Treasury has no option under the circumstances but to look for other alternatives, because it is striving, not only to maintain the level of its revenue, but also to raise it.

Therefore, the tax on consumption, which is effectively a customs duty, as far as imports are concerned, and an excise duty as far as local production is concerned, was a necessary step, duly justified financially and economically, and a right response to the new emerging circumstances.

Finally, one has to point out the fact that high walls of protection for local production is one of the major obstacles for Arab and regional cooperation and economic integration. Which is an inevitable objective for survival and prosperity. If we are serious about regional Arab cooperation, as a step towards one form or another of an Arab integration, we have to gradually scale down customs duty to give way for a unified tax on income, and more taxes on consumption, not only in Jordan but also in every other Arab country that admits to be a part of a longer community.

Sacrifice is worth the prize

THE FALL of Romanian President Nicolae Ceausescu and his tyrannical system Friday completes the circle of reformation in Eastern Europe albeit at a high price. Until his downfall, the bets were in favour of him holding on to power even if that entailed the sacrifice of thousands of his people. In this context and sense the end of Ceausescu era is an added proof that the odds in contemporary days are solidly in favour of democracy and against the continuation of tyranny. The entire continent of Europe can now rejoice in overthrowing the last vestiges of totalitarian rule within its borders. Likewise the forces of freedom and democracy worldwide can take comfort from the fact that the tide of democratisation is proceeding forward at full speed and that the thirst for it across many other lands can never be quenched until reforms reach them as well.

It is ironic that the leadership in Romania could not see the tide of democracy coming their way and prepare themselves for it as it has happened in other Warsaw Pact countries. The irony is even greater when it comes to other parts of the world where inspite of repeated warnings about the incoming tidal wave of democracy some governments still cling to archaic justification for keeping their peoples under siege and chained to conditions bordering on slavery. The puzzling question is when will governments that continue to practise totalitarianism heed the call for democratisation and reforms? Must the bloody experience of Romania be repeated over and over again before the message of democracy soaks in the minds and hearts of officialdom that belong to bygone days? Must blood be always spilt before corrections and reformations are introduced? The Romanian people paid dearly with their blood and offered a fine and honourable example of the price that people deprived of freedom are willing to sustain to attain their legitimate aspirations. Mankind all over the world owes them much gratitude and appreciation for without their magnificent triumph the cause of freedom would have remained incomplete.

The Jordanian people who are blessed with a fine example of functioning democracy take special pride to salute the Romanian people on their victory over tyranny. At the same time Jordan takes time on this occasion of forward marching democracy everywhere in the world to highlight the fact that it has given its continuing process of democratisation additional boosts, on every opportunity, culminating in a phenomenon of mushrooming and snowballing democracy that has attained new heights through harmonious and rational methods characterised by responsibility and common sense. Seen against this backdrop, the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan has emerged as a principle locomotive for positive change and reformation in the Middle East region and as a vanguard of constructive evolutionary transformation. The people with a good taste of freedom are in the best position to appreciate the hard won freedoms by other peoples and that is what brings Jordanians and Romanians that much closer together.

ARABIC PRESS EDITORIALS

Al Ra'i Arabic daily Saturday tackled an Euro Arab meeting held in Paris over the past two days and said that the participants discussed the Palestine question, and the situations in the Gulf and Lebanon among other topics. The paper noted that the meeting displayed beyond any doubt that the Europeans want to prove that they constitute a power that should be reckoned with by Moscow and Washington and that they are determined to conduct their business with regards to regional issues without external influence. Israel's claim that the Palestine problem is being shelved by the Europeans, whose hands are now full in the light of developments in Eastern Europe, is therefore baseless, said the paper. It noted that the meeting in Paris proved also that the Europeans are concerned with holding an international conference on the Middle East so as to ensure lasting peace in the area. The Europeans have declared that they intend to exercise pressure on the United States which holds the cards in the Middle East issue, to be more realistic and help the Palestinian people regain their right to independence, the paper added. In addition, the European and Arab delegates turned their attention to economic and technological cooperation; and this is a clear sign that Europe intends to maintain its close ties with the Arab side, the paper pointed out. It said that the meeting can be described as having achieved a good degree of success and served as a constructive move to cement Euro-Arab relations.

A columnist in Al Ra'i Arabic daily launches a severe attack on the toppled Communist leader of Romania for his dictatorial rule over the past two decades. Tareq Masarweh says that Nicolae Ceausescu has fallen under the wrath and the blows of the people, despite United States support for the dictator who recognised as a hero because he confronted Moscow's policies in the Communist World. The writer reminds his readers that Ceausescu was serving the American — Zionist cause by allowing Romanian Jews to emigrate to Israel in return for \$20,000 each. Ceausescu's Romania also received unlimited amounts of loans and assistance from the West; and the West German tourists thronged Romania's cities and resorts as a show of gratitude for Ceausescu and his policies against Moscow and in favour of Israel, the writer points out. He says the ousted dictator had ruled his country with an iron fist, filling government posts with his relatives and those of his wife who helped to spread the rule of terrorism in Romania. The writer says that as the people of Romania are engaged in liberating their country, the United States is involved in a new war of colonialism against a small nation, Panama, whose leader General Noriega had served the interests of the United States for so long. The writer says that the United States has no democracy when it comes to dealing with other nations; and it prefers the language of tanks and narcotics warfare in its dealings with Panama and other small nations in Latin America.

Why the U.S. failed to respond to Arafat

By John Law

THE events in Algiers and Geneva one year ago gave the United States an unprecedented opportunity to use its influence to bring an end to the Arab-Israeli conflict. So how well did the administration take advantage of it? On a grading scale of one to ten, it would be generous to award it with a "one."

To see why, just look again at the developments that took place last November and December, which the U.S. has in the meantime failed to exploit. First the proclamation by Palestinians of a state that encompasses as its territory the West Bank (including East Jerusalem) and Gaza, no more and no less. In making this proclamation the Palestinians were telling Israel — and the U.S. as well — that in the interests of a final settlement they were ready to accept only 22 per cent of Palestine for their homeland, allowing Israel to keep the other 78 per cent. Although an offer to accept a state within such boundaries had already been a *de facto* PLO policy for many years, what made the situation different this time was that the Palestine National Council voted to make this policy official. Considering that Palestinians formed more than 90 per cent of Palestine's population at the time of Balfour Declaration and still outnumbered Israelis by more than two to one (while owning 93 per cent of the land) when Israel was established in 1948, this was an enormous compromise for them to offer.

The Israelis, of course, rejected it out of hand, because aside from Likud's refusal to give up "one square inch" of occupied territory, even the supposedly more conciliatory Labour Party does not envisage allowing the Palestinians to have all of the West Bank — a substantial portion of it must be held for "security" reasons they argue, and East Jerusalem is "non-negotiable." So what was the U.S. reaction?

It is unfortunate, but not surprising, that the administration did not give the Palestinians any credit for their willingness to give up more than three quarters of their homeland. The idea that it is the Palestinians who have been the aggressors and the Israelis the victims has been so firmly embedded in the American psyche, through years of Israeli myth-making, that more often than not the American "man in the street" will tell you something like: "Why should the Palestinians get anything? Let them go live somewhere else. Haven't they been attacking Israel long enough?"

On the other hand, many (but not all) foreign affairs experts in the administration know better than this, as do a few of the top officials. At the same time, however, they are convinced in the American tradition that it is not "good politics" to heap public praise on the Palestinians for anything, and it is even worse politics to suggest that they should be allowed to have an independent state of their own. The result: U.S. policy, one year later, still favours Palestinian "local autonomy" in the West Bank and Gaza, but not statehood. There has never been a hint that this policy will change.

The gamble that failed

Second, one year ago Yasser Arafat said the "magic words" — recognising the "existence" of Israel, accepting U.N. Resolution 242 and renouncing "terrorism" — that for 14 years the U.S. had been insisting must be spoken as a condition for it to "recognise or negotiate with" the PLO. Arafat had always been particularly reluctant to say the words of recognition, on the grounds that Israel had already gone on record as being unwilling to recognise the PLO even if the PLO decided to recognise Israel. Why, Arafat reasoned, should he play his big-gest cards just for the sake of getting recognised by the U.S.,

when it had no effect upon Israel? He finally took the gamble that once the U.S. recognised the PLO it would finally begin twisting Israel's arm to do the same.

The U.S.'s first reaction to the "magic words" looked promising. Shortly after Arafat's announcement — which he was asked to repeat several times until he got the wording just right, like a schoolboy reciting his lessons — the then secretary of state, George Shultz, announced that the U.S. was ending its quarantine of the PLO and would open up a dialogue with it. In short order this was done, with the appointment of the American ambassador to Tunisia as the sole authorised American channel for dialogue.

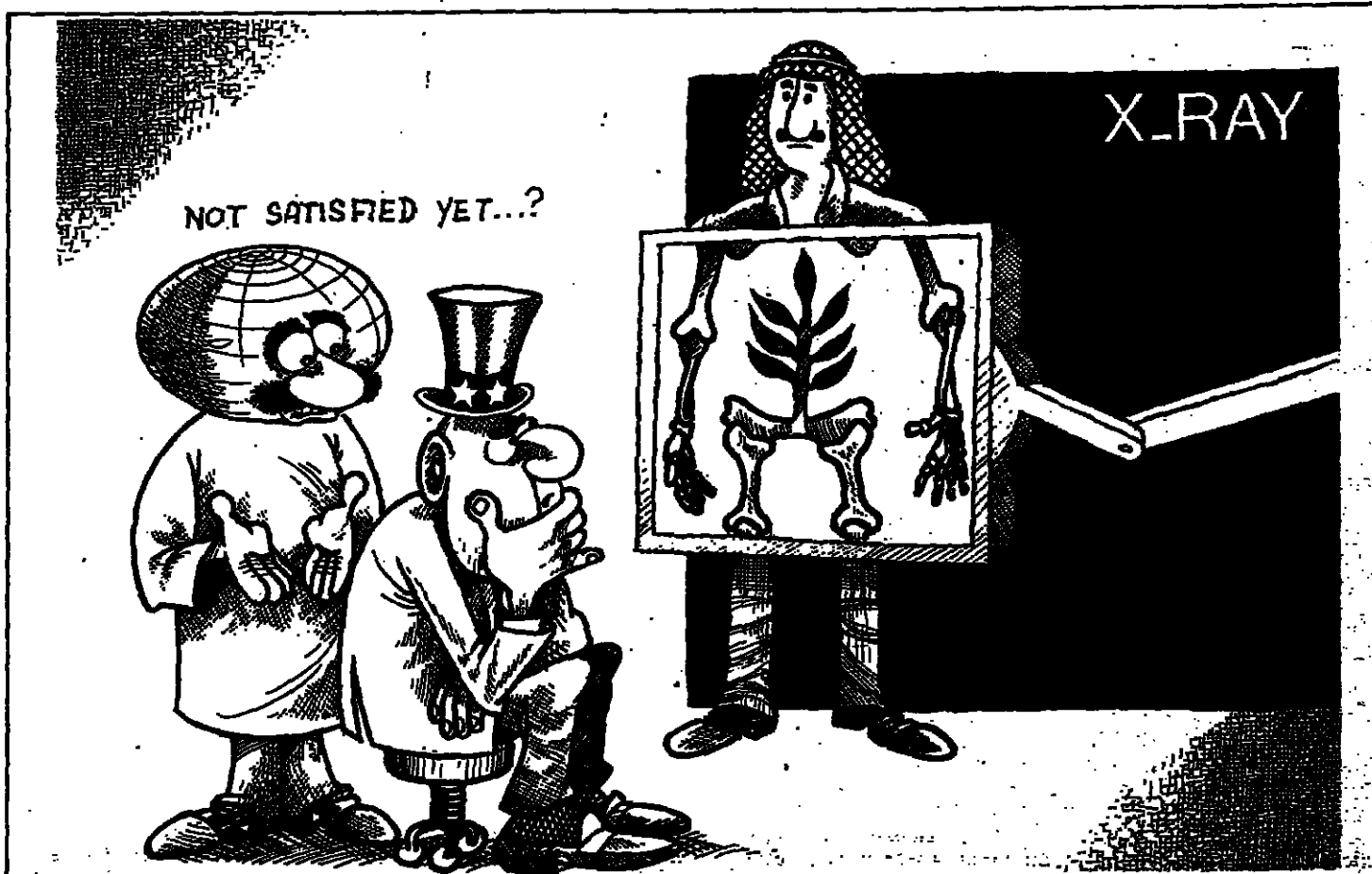
Now almost a year old, this U.S.-PLO dialogue has gone precisely nowhere, however. It is still being carried on at the same, low ambassadorial level at which it began, despite PLO requests to move to higher-level meetings. Most of the PLO's top leaders are not even allowed to enter the country. Those who are can find themselves deprived of the right of free speech. This happened to Um Jihad, widow of the assassinated Palestinian leader Abu Jihad, who, arriving with a visa, was told by the State Department that she would not be permitted to address the annual convention of the National Association of Arab Americans, to which she had been invited. As for Yasser Arafat, the State Department made it clear to him only last month (nearly a year after the "dialogue" had started) that he would not be welcomed to visit New York for the purpose of addressing the U.N. General Assembly, thereby leading Arafat to decline to apply for an American visa he knew he would not get. Furthermore, the administration has not allowed the reopening in Washington of the Palestine Information Office, closed down a couple of years ago on the grounds that it was an organ of the PLO.

Still soft on Israel

Clearly, Arafat has so far lost his gamble, in playing the card that gave recognition to Israel. Not only has U.S. recognition of the PLO turned out to be lukewarm and conditional, there has been no American pressure on Israel to deal with it.

There has, in fact, been no pressure on Israel, period. Many believed George Bush's administration would take a more realistic and informed view of the problems of the Middle East than President Reagan had. The selection of James Baker as secretary of state was indeed regarded by many as a significant improvement over George Shultz, the man who used to lead the chanting of "PLO, hell no!" at gatherings of Jewish lobby groups and was arguably the most rabid partisan of Israel ever to have held the office. In some respects Baker has been an improvement. He has not only refrained from appointing himself leader of an "Israel is always right" cheering section, but he even told a meeting of AIPAC last May that Israel should "lay aside the unrealistic vision of a Greater Israel" — i.e., an Israel that would encompass the West Bank (including all of Jerusalem), Gaza, the Golan Heights, and perhaps a lot more (like southern Lebanon).

But the new image and occasionally new oratory have been words on the wind, bringing with them virtually nothing in terms of progress towards a Middle East settlement. There has been no indication from Israel that Shamir, Arafat and the like have considered even remotely their abandonment of their vision of a "Greater Israel." Nor has the administration done anything that would be likely to influence them to do so. When Prime Minister Shamir came out with a so-called "plan" last May calling for elections in the West Bank and Gaza (on condition that the *intifada* stopped first) that would



lead the way to establishing a five-year period of "local autonomy" to be followed by discussions of "final status" for the territories, the State Department greeted the proposal with considerable warmth, and ever since has been working on ways to bring it to fruition.

Aside from the fact that Shamir's repeated affirmations that "final status" could never mean Palestinian statehood should have made the proposal a non-starter, it has been bogged down from the outset over the question of which Palestinians should enter negotiations to discuss how to hold elections which would produce Palestinians who would later be able to enter new negotiations to determine whether a basis for negotiations with Israel over a final settlement exists or not. No kidding! But what has prevented this "plan" from getting past even the first step is Israel's determination not to allow any PLO official or anyone appointed by the PLO to be a member of the Palestinian team that would negotiate the modality of the proposed elections.

Let Rome burn

The U.S., although grumbling occasionally over some of Shamir's

other tough conditions, has been giving his election idea its support and been searching for ways to foist it onto the PLO without allowing the PLO direct representation. Current American policy calls for the U.S. to get together with Israel and Egypt, which would act as middleman for the Palestinians, in order to select Palestinian negotiators acceptable to Israel. However, if the administration does not succeed, it will not put meaningful pressure on Israel to drop its

opposition to having PLO representatives.

That this would be likely to happen should be no surprise, because during the very period when Shamir's prevarications have been making it increasingly clear that his "plan" is really just a pretext to stall, the U.S. has been rewarding Israel with a series of largely unpublicised offers of new aid.

In the meantime, the Palestinians both inside and outside the

occupied territories are getting more and more frustrated, and every day there are more of them who call for an escalation of armed conflict. At the same time, the trend in Israel shows a rise in the power of the hard-liners. So while Rome is burning, the policy makers in Washington remain absorbed with counting how many angles can fit on the end of a pin. The metaphor may be imited, but the truth is all too stark — Middle East International, London.

LETTERS

Oversight

To the Editor:

THE Jordan Times of Dec. 18, 1989 published on page 3 an article about the Al Hussein Society for the Physically Handicapped bazaar.

Amongst all the embassies, you mentioned Sweden, which did not participate. You, however, failed to mention the Scandinavian Ladies of Amman (SLA). The SLA's stand produced the largest revenue that day.

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A friend of Jordan carries home friendship and good will

By Hind-Lara Mango
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Relations between Jordan and Pakistan date back to the days of the creation of Pakistan four decades ago, and these ties continue to be strengthened, based on goodwill, the common faith — Islam — and shared beliefs and viewpoints. That's how the ambassador of Pakistan to Jordan summed up his impressions at the end of his tenure in the Kingdom.

Saghir Hussein Syed, who left Jordan earlier this month after three years of stay in the Kingdom, said: "Ties between Pakistan and Jordan are strong, permanent, and based on goodwill. Both share common beliefs and a common faith, and have not differed much with each other's policies."

The ambassador noted that relations have been very close between the leaderships of the two countries since the time of the late President Field Marshal Ayyub Khan. "When crises arose, both countries have acted as brothers putting the solid relationship to the test," the ambassador. He pointed out that the late President "Zia ul-Haq" served in Jordan as an officer of the army along with a large number of officers.

"The Jordanian armed forces remember the Pakistani soldier's dedication, honesty, and concerted efforts," Hussein Syed said.

"The two countries have exchanged views and learned from each other's experiences."

With the newly elected prime minister, Benazir Bhutto, relations continue to be warm. His Majesty King Hussein and Bhutto met in Tokyo this summer at the funeral of Emperor Hirohito and Bhutto paid tribute to His Majesty's leadership saying that in him Pakistan "sees a friend of Arabs and Muslim countries, always available to give genuine advice, guidance, and assistance," said the ambassador.

Democracy has taken its roots in both countries, he added. "Both countries have undergone recent elections which have allowed democracy to flourish."

"Opposition is another dimension to elections, and it always wishes to oust the sitting government. But this is a healthy sign, because without it a relaxed atmosphere is created, paving the way for corruption. Jordan's democracy has come after some time," Hussein Syed asserted.

The ambassador believes that the majority of the Jordanians were very happy with the Nov. 8 elections. "What does one want finally out of a government? That there be proper roads, hospitals, schools and other essential necessities. So elections have taken place, one party was more organized, than the others, and it got over 30 seats in the Lower House," he said. "I feel that phase one has been achieved by holding peaceful and fair elections. In the near future Parliament is going to be a great advantage; there will be problems here and there; some fundamentalists have their own views on how the country should be run."

The ambassador went on to say that state administration and religion differ "for, in religion one has to unite the people into one team without allowing what one party says to be executed in totality." He said that if religion "is twisted to such an extent that it is creating conflict and dislike among the people, then it is not following the proper teachings of Islam."

"One thousand four hundred years ago, the Prophet Muhammad was able to unite the total Muslims of the world under one umbrella — that is democracy," he said.

The ambassador praised His Majesty's handling of Jordan's affairs as a model for other countries. "It is a pride for the Middle Eastern countries to see how Jordan is administered," he said. "Now that I am leaving, I will carry with me my straight impressions of a social, developed country. I am confident that Parliament will take steps forward."

Jordan-Pakistani relations are also strong in the military area. Large numbers of Pakistani officers visit Jordan, and vice versa. Pakistan has half a million citizens in the army out of its 105 million population. Both countries initially were under British colonialism, recalls Hussein Syed, who was originally a general in the army. "British officers are excellent soldiers. Hence, both countries benefited well from this. As an ambassador half of my time was spent organising mutual training courses," he added.

The ambassador pointed out that Jordan "is rich in its human resources, and has a high standard of education." He believes that the educational institutions in Jordan can compete with any top institutions in the world. "Also, that genuine efforts have been made in educating the people of Jordan," he noted. In the last 20 years, he said, Pakistan has received over 15,000 to 20,000 Jordanian students. In view of this a Jordanian-Pakistani graduate club has been established here. "Not many Pakistanis come to study here because of the many institutions in Pakistan," he said. "In addition, fees here have become very high for foreign students, whereas fees in Pakistan are low for Jordanians wishing to study there."

The ambassador agrees that economically Jordan has had a set-back. But he explains that there "are certain times when economic policies go wrong. But many institutions have opened up, in Jordan and many programmes have been set up in order to help solve this problem." The ambassador is very optimistic where Jordan's economy is concerned because of the tremendous efforts being made.

Pakistan is the fourth largest country to import Jordan's phosphate and exports hand-made artifacts to the Kingdom. Pakistan is an agricultural country. Before the partition it was known to be the greenery of India. Most Pakistanis living in Jordan work in the field of agriculture. Pakistan, said Hussein Syed, "has plenty of water, it is rich in dams both for canal irrigation and areas that do not have canals. Jordan does not have any canals except one in the valley. Both countries have the same sort of agriculture in terms of their drip systems, and water conservation. So Pakistani farmers work in the Jordan Valley and Madaba, and raise tobacco and vegetable crops."

Despite the fact that there have been many Pakistanis in Jordan for more than 20 years, not more than 100 have taken the Jordanian citizenship. Jordan is the second home to 15,000 Pakistanis, and likewise, Pakistan hosts many Jordanians studying and working there," according to the ambassador. They marry amongst themselves, and they are looked after by the Jordanian government. Small groups work in the cement, and potash factories. On the Palestinian question, the ambassador explains: "The problem is one of all Muslims of the world, and Arabs. The unarmed Palestinians of the intifada are supported by the people of Pakistan. An international peace conference suggested by His Majesty is the answer."

"He said that 'everyone knows that the Palestinians have a genuine problem, of their desire for an independent state and resolve their relations with the Israelis are totally on the right lines.' Benazir Bhutto has accepted an invitation to come to Jordan and will pay the visit once she establishes domestic political stability, according to the ambassador. "She totally supports the Palestinians in their plight," Yasser Arafat has already made two visits to Pakistan this year he said.

The present Pakistani ambassador to Brazil, Tarik Afidi, will be filling in Hussein Syed's vacant post. He is expected to be here in February. "My wife and I are leaving Jordan fully content that during our stay here we have worked probably as we would have in our own country in social organisations, and professional fields. We have both taken a keen and active interest in Jordan," Hussein Syed concluded.

Children pay debts

The poor world is now paying the rich world \$178 billion a year — three times as much as all the aid it receives — to service its debts. One result is that spending on health, nutrition and education has been cut back in many countries over the last five years. "What this means," says UNICEF in its 1990 State of the World's Children report, "is that the heaviest burden of the debt crisis is falling on the growing minds and bodies of children in the developing world."

After decades of steady advance, large areas of the developing world have been sliding backwards in the 1980s. On average, incomes are down 10 per cent in Latin America and 25 per cent in sub-Saharan Africa. "For the very poor who are forced to spend three-quarters of their incomes on food," says UNICEF, "falling wages mean rising malnutrition."

In three-quarters of the nations of Africa and Latin America, health spending per person has declined in the 1980s and the consequences are now becoming visible. Hundreds of health clinics have been closed and many which remain open are understaffed and lacking essential supplies. Infant mortality is known to have risen in parts of Africa and Latin America. The incidence of low birth weight, a sensitive indicator of the well-being of women, has increased in seven nations out of the fifteen for which recent information is available.

Children have also been paying the Third World's debt with the loss of their only opportunity to be educated, says UNICEF. In the 37 poorest countries of the world, spending per head on schools has declined by approximately 25 per cent in the last decade. In one out of every five developing countries, primary school numbers have actually declined and in two out of every three countries spending per student is lower now than in 1980.

In addition to these measurable

consequences of the debt crisis, UNICEF also cites the concerns expressed by its own staff, working in over 100 nations of the world, who are reporting increases in child abandonment, juvenile delinquency, accidents, and drug abuse.

"The chilling injustice of what is happening," says UNICEF, "is escaping our attention, passing by our windows on the smooth flow of economic analysis, disguising itself in the respectable clothing of the financial vocabulary."

Human Capital

"The central thesis of this year's message from UNICEF," says the agency's Executive Director James Grant, "is that children should be protected from the worst consequences of the adult world's excesses and mistakes, whether we are talking about violence or war or about the cumulative effects of economic mismanagement."

Apart from the obvious moral case, the report argues that there is also a strong economic case for protecting the rising generation. "Human capital is a far more important factor in economic growth than physical capital," says economist Dr. Richard Jolly, a Deputy Executive Director of UNICEF. "Investment in human capital in the form of nutrition, basic education, and health cannot be postponed: it either takes place at an appropriate age when the need is present — or it does not. For the young child, there is

no second chance. The under-emphasized tragedy of the disinvestment in human capital in the 1980s is that the results will be carried forward in stunted bodies and deficient educations well into the 21st century."

In part, the vulnerable could be protected by shifting the balance of spending in their favour. But in many countries, says UNICEF, this will probably not be possible without increased support from the industrialized nations.

"Politically, it is no easy task," says Grant, "to engineer a shift in priorities from urban hospitals to rural clinics, from national airlines to domestic bus routes, from prestigious lecture halls to humble primary schools, from meeting the focused expectations of the politically powerful to the diffuse hopes of the poor majority."

"Now is therefore the time for the developing nations to draw up plans for expanding primary education and primary health care systems, for low cost water and sanitation systems, for national nutrition programmes, for reducing child deaths and child illnesses, and for protecting the environment. Given some progress in resolving the debt crisis, such plans could form the basis for an increased and newly directed AID and investment effort in the decade ahead."

"There are increasing signs," says the report, "that increases in aid would be supported by the public of the industrialized world IF it was widely felt that aid was being used for the attack on poverty and the defence of the environment."

Sacrifices

The prospects for progress will remain gloomy while more than a quarter of the developing world's earnings are sluiced away in debt repayments instead of being invested in growth, says the report. But there are some small signs of hope as the 1990s begin.

In the last two years, the total debt of the developing world has fallen for the first time since the crisis began in the early 1980s. "There is also growing recognition," says UNICEF, "that more dramatic and decisive action on debt is in the interests of both industrialized and developing worlds. Such action should include writing off most of the remaining debts owed by Africa to the governments of the western industrialized nations and further reductions in the commercial debts of many Latin American countries."

"Without such action," says UNICEF, "the crisis will cast its shadow over the next decade and the lives, the health, the growth, and the education of millions of children of the 1990s will again be sacrificed on the altar of debt."



Children are hardest hit by the debt crisis — spending on nutrition, health and education has been cut back in perhaps half the nations of the developing world says UNICEF.

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After a rapid rise in the 60s and 70s, the proportion of the developing world's children enrolled in school has begun to fall again. The first World Conference on Education for All, meeting in Thailand in March 1990, will seek ways to reverse the trend — UNICEF.

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The tale of two blue chips

By Chet Currier
The Associated Press

NEW YORK — One blue-chip stock multiplied your money to nearly 10 times its former value. Another turned your dollar into less than a dime.

That, in microcosm, was the story of the 1980s on Wall Street — a decade in which many fortunes were made, and more than a few were lost, in a roaring bull market.

To pick the biggest winner among the 30 stocks that now make up the Dow Jones industrial average, you had to ignore a gathering storm over the tobacco industry.

The company in question was Philip Morris, whose shares increased almost 850 per cent in value from the beginning of the '80s through mid-December, according to calculations by William Lefevre at the investment firm of Advest Incorporated. Adjusted for splits, Philip Morris stock soared from \$4.50 to \$40-plus.

Philip Morris, widely known as the producer of Marlboro and several other cigarette brands, began a diversification programme many years ago with Miller Brewing Company.

In the '80s it claimed the status of world's largest manufacturer of consumer products with the acquisitions of General Foods and Kraft Inc., gaining such familiar product lines as Maxwell House coffee and Post cereals.

Meanwhile, it strengthened its hold as the dominant force in the tobacco industry.

Biggest loser

At the other end of the standings, Navistar International was the biggest loser among the Dow 30, falling from \$39.12 at the start of the '80s to less than \$4 recently.

Navistar, known a decade ago as International Harvester, left the farm- and construction-machinery businesses to concentrate on making trucks and diesel-powered equipment. It suffered through a seven-year spell of losses before recently returning to profitability.

Among the winners, Philip Morris wasn't alone in benefiting from the ravenous consumer appetites of the '80s.

Close behind it in the Dow

performance ranking stood McDonald's Corporation, up nearly 700 per cent; Coca-Cola, up nearly 600 per cent, and Merck, the health care giant, up more than 500 per cent.

Like Navistar, Bethlehem Steel, which was down more than 20 per cent, and International Business Machines (IBM), up less than 50 per cent, reflected the many problems of the economy's industrial sector.

What did all this mean for a diversified portfolio of stocks? Once the big winners and losers are balanced out, the Dow Jones industrial average has more than tripled. "All in all, not a bad 10 years," Lefevre observed.

In the past week, the average suffered something of a setback, beset by fears that softening real estate markets might increase the odds of a recession in 1990. It closed Friday at 2,711.39, down 28.16 from the week before.

The New York stock exchange composite index dropped 1.50 to 191.95; the Nasdaq composite index for the over-the-counter market rose 73 to 444.57, and the American stock exchange market value index was down 1.50 to 191.95.

Volume on the big board averaged 168.70 million shares a day, against 185.54 million the week before.

Just how the experience of the '80s might translate into good decisions for the '90s remains to be seen.

Some say the new decade, like the old one, may begin with a recession, especially since the great prosperity of the past several years has left a lot of debt to be paid.

Others contend that the pessimists and the skeptics, who missed many an opportunity in the '80s, may just wind up repeating the same mistake.

Whatever happens, however, people in the stocks and bonds business say the story of the '80s' big winners and losers provides a dramatic demonstration of the virtues of a diversified investment programme.

Anyone who owned \$10,000 each of the best and worst blue chips through the '80s would have an \$80,000-plus Philip Morris profit as consolation, and then some, for a \$9000 Navistar loss.

Two industries to benefit from Kuwait fund loan

AMMAN (J.T.) — Two Jordanian companies are to receive a total of eight million Kuwaiti dinars as loans from the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development to help finance their expansion projects under an agreement signed at the Ministry of Planning here Saturday.

One of the beneficiaries is the Jordan Electricity Authority (JEA), which will get 3.25 million Kuwaiti dinars that will be used to finance the transfer of installation of two gas-powered turbines at the Rishah gas fields near the Iraqi border. The turbines, which are located south of Amman, will be driven by gas extracted from the fields instead of transporting the gas to the location.

The loan will also be used to help JEA to purchase and install equipment needed for the operation and its transformer stations as well as other technical and power distribution needs.

The other beneficiary is the Jordan Phosphate Mines Company (JPMC), which will receive a total 4.75 million Kuwaiti dinars. The loan will help JPMC to mine and process phosphate-based fertilisers which are produced at the fertilizer plant in Agaba and to purchase spare parts for the JPMC mines and fertilizer plant.

Over the past four months the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development has been conducting feasibility studies on the two projects, which were later endorsed by the fund's board.

The agreement was signed by Minister of Planning Awad Al Masri and the fund's director-general, Bader Muskhari.

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Biggest bankruptcy case in history ends

Hunt relinquishes estate

DALLAS (AP) — Ex-billionaire William Herbert Hunt has relinquished his estate, bringing to a conclusion one of the biggest personal bankruptcies in history.

Herbert and his brother, Nelson Bunker Hunt, were once two of the richest men of the world, with a net worth of more than \$3 billion. On Thursday, a week after the bankruptcy case ended, Herbert relinquished his estate to a liquidating trustee.

Hunt's financial problems began in 1980 when he and his brother lost \$1.5 billion speculating in the silver futures markets. The silver losses were compounded by falling real estate prices and the collapse of the oil market.

The brothers filed for bankruptcy protection in September 1988, shortly after a New York jury found they had conspired to corner the silver market.

On June 14, U.S. bankruptcy Judge Harold Abramson granted the brothers' request that 601 silver claims be dismissed from the bankruptcy proceedings.

However, the decision left intact almost 600 claims amounting to about \$360 million stemming from the brothers' silver speculation. Included in that is a reduced \$134.6-million judgment in favour of Minepaco S.A. of Peru.

On Thursday U.S. bankruptcy Judge Harold Abramson signed the order that will transfer the fallen oilman's estate to a liquidating trust within 10 days.

Hunt's \$169 million estate will be liquidated to pay creditors over the next six years, absolving him of nearly \$1 billion in debts.

Seventy per cent of Herbert's holdings will go to the U.S. federal tax agency, and the other 30 per cent will be divided among the remaining creditors, including Manufacturers Hanover and Minpeco S.A.

Hugh Ray, an attorney for Manufacturers Hanover Trust Company, said it was "miraculous" to have two such sizable bankruptcy cases resolved in 15 months.

Under the plan confirmed Thursday, Herbert will be stripped of his assets, which are concentrated heavily in depressed Texas and Arizona real estate.

Hunt will lose his \$400,000 salary, but he will keep his Cadillac car, \$1.2 million Dallas mansion, personal effects totaling \$50,000 and a 50 per cent interest in non-producing oil and gas properties.

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Weekly Amman Financial Market trading

AMMAN (J.T.) — The following table summarises trading activities at the Amman Financial Market starting Saturday Dec. 16, '89 and ending Wednesday Dec. 20, '89. (Figures in Jordanian dinars).

| Name of company | Number of shares | Volume of trade | Opening price | Closing price | Per value |
|--|------------------|-----------------|---------------|---------------|-----------|
| Banking and financial institutions | | | | | |
| Industrial Development Bank | 3200 | 52480 | 1.650 | 1.640 | 1.000 |
| Jordan Islamic Bank | 1200 | 2982 | 2.460 | 2.530 | 1.000 |
| Jordan Kuwait Bank | 2150 | 2951 | 1.370 | 1.370 | 1.000 |
| Housing Bank | 36630 | 76191 | 2.080 | 2.100 | 1.000 |
| Arab Jordan Investment Bank | — | — | — | — | 5.000 |
| Cairo Amman Bank | — | — | — | — | 5.000 |
| Bank of Jordan | 981 | 13739 | 14.000 | 14.000 | 10.000 |
| Arab Bank | 2270 | 474545 | 209.500 | 210.000 | 1.000 |
| Jordan National Bank | 12606 | 31776 | 2.520 | 2.520 | 1.000 |
| Jordan Finance House for Development | — | — | — | — | 1.000 |
| Jordan Investment and Finance Bank | 19750 | 65286 | 3.330 | 3.260 | 1.000 |
| National Financial Investments | — | — | — | — | 1.000 |
| National Portfolio Securities | 60011 | 118631 | 1.980 | 1.930 | 1.000 |
| Arab Finance Corporation (Jordan) | 15600 | 39394 | 2.480 | 2.520 | 1.000 |
| Jordan Securities Corporation | — | — | — | — | 2.000 |
| Real Estate Financing Corporation | — | — | — | — | 1.000 |
| Beit Al Mai Saving & Investment for Housing | 3666 | 3391 | 0.920 | 0.920 | 1.000 |
| Insurance and reinsurance | | | | | |
| Middle East Insurance | 110.000 | 199.100 | 1.900 | 1.890 | 1.000 |
| Jordan French Insurance | 11603 | 20896 | 1.800 | 1.780 | 1.000 |
| Jordan Life and Accident Insurance | 18090 | 45475 | 2.500 | 2.550 | 1.000 |
| Yarmouk Insurance and Reinsurance | 1500 | 1950 | 1.300 | 1.300 | 1.000 |
| Holy Land Insurance | — | — | — | — | 1.000 |
| Philadelphiya Insurance | 2670 | 3898 | 1.420 | 1.460 | 1.000 |
| Arab Union International Insurance | 3684 | 5203 | 1.430 | 1.450 | 1.000 |
| Jerusalem Insurance | 846 | 1396 | 1.650 | 1.650 | 1.000 |
| Jordan Gulf Insurance | 100 | 162 | 1.620 | 1.620 | 1.000 |
| General Arabia Insurance | — | — | — | — | 1.000 |
| National Ahlhiya Insurance | 1694 | 2897 | 1.700 | 1.700 | 1.000 |
| Arab Belgian Insurance and Reinsurance | — | — | — | — | 1.000 |
| United Insurance | — | — | — | — | 1.000 |
| Services and industries | | | | | |
| General Investments | 250 | 382 | 1.520 | 1.590 | 1.000 |
| Imma for Investment and Financial Facilities | — | — | — | — | 1.000 |
| Darco for Housing and Investment | 4341 | 4501 | 1.030 | 1.040 | 1.000 |
| Real Estate Investment (Agroco) | 760912 | 625080 | 0.760 | 0.850 | 1.000 |
| Arab Gulf Real Estate Investment | 1242463 | 651678 | 0.470 | 0.540 | 1.000 |
| Petra Enterprises and Leasing Equipments | — | — | — | — | 1.000 |
| Equipment Leasing & Maintenance/Tajeroo | 134750 | 55670 | 0.900 | 0.900 | 1.000 |
| International Contracting & Investment | — | — | — | — | 1.000 |
| Jordanian Electric Power | 6623 | 9719 | 1.450 | 1.470 | 1.000 |
| Irbid District Electricity | — | — | — | — | 1.000 |
| Arab International Hotels | 113171 | 183894 | 1.610 | 1.600 | 1.000 |
| Hotels and Tourism | — | — | — | — | 1.000 |
| United Middle East and Commodore Hotels | 16900 | 9920 | 0.530 | 0.620 | 1.000 |
| Garage Owners Federation Office | — | — | — | — | 1.000 |
| Jordan National Shipping Lines | 104200 | 283296 | 2.676 | 2.640 | 1.000 |
| Jordan Press Foundation | 8012 | 31867 | 3.480 | 3.400 | 1.000 |
| Jordan Press and Publishing | 9580 | 19114 | 1.710 | 2.080 | 1.000 |
| Arab Paper Printing and Publishing | 155154 | 255199 | 1.640 | 1.620 | 1.000 |
| Arab Pharmaceutical Manufacturing | 18295 | 92243 | 5.130 | 5.100 | 1.000 |
| Intermediate Petrochemical Industries | 95605 | 270366 | 2.800 | 2.830 | 1.000 |
| Jordan Phosphate Mines | 2197 | 9362 | 4.280 | 4.280 | 1.000 |
| Industrial, Commercial and Agricultural (Inta) | 35238 | 98704 | 2.810 | 2.760 | 1.000 |
| Arab Chemical Detergent Industries | 3111 | 21032 | 6.400 | 6.600 | 1.000 |
| Jordan Kuwait for Agricultural Products | 502850 | 664390 | 1.300 | 1.610 | 1.000 |
| Jordan Sweets and Chocolate Manufacturing | — | — | — | — | 1.000 |
| Aladdin Industries | 54423 | 199428 | 3.600 | 3.650 | 1.000 |
| Arab Aluminium Manufacturing | 100425 | 283639 | 2.740 | 2.820 | 1.000 |
| Jordan Worsteds Mills | — | — | — | — | 1.000 |
| Jordan Ceramics | 12831 | 42416 | 3.350 | 3.300 | 1.000 |

World leaders welcome end of Ceausescu epoch

LONDON (R) — World leaders were eager to bury Romanian President Nicolae Ceausescu as a tyrant and bully even as loyalist forces launched a counter-attack.

British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher said Ceausescu's overthrow marked the end of a bloody tyranny and praised demonstrators as heroes of an historic day in Europe.

"The people of Romania have taken liberty for themselves... that is wonderful news," Thatcher told a television interviewer. "We should spare a thought for the very courageous people who were not prepared to knuckle under in a bloodstained tyranny."

A few hours earlier Queen Elizabeth stripped Ceausescu of an honorary knighthood awarded during a visit to London in 1978.

"This action has been taken as a mark of revulsion at the abuse of human rights in Romania for which President Ceausescu is responsible," the Foreign Office said, adding that the queen had also returned a Romanian honour Ceausescu had awarded her.

Norway's King Olav also asked Ceausescu to hand back an honorary award made in 1980. The Foreign Ministry said Olav planned to give back his own Order of the People of the Star.

In Paris President Francois Mitterrand welcomed the end of 24 years of authoritarian rule in Bucharest.

"The Romanians are free. Europe can breathe easy. It is good news for all of us," Mitterrand told reporters.

Czechoslovak reformist leader Vaclav Havel called for just punishment, but not the death sentence, for Ceausescu.

"On behalf of our gentle revolution, which probably accelerated the course of events in Romania, I ask all Romanian citizens not to pay back for violence with violence and for cruelty with cruelty," Havel said.

"Demand just punishment (for those) who for so long and so brutally scourged your country. Stop the wave of violence lest it should flood Europe."

European Community foreign ministers meeting in Paris were preparing an appeal against violence in Romania when the news of Ceausescu's fall came through. They scrapped their agenda and agreed to hold a special meeting on the Romanian crisis including proposals for immediate aid.

"The international community, and in particular the European Community, must urgently come to the help of the Romanian people to help it overcome a tragic stage in its history, which has moreover had disastrous economic consequences," European Parliament President Enrique Baron said.

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) has volunteered to send medical and other assistance to Romania.

Romanian emigres in Paris toasted Ceausescu's apparent overthrow with champagne but deplored the loss of life involved.

"It is the end of Communism," said playwright Eugene Ionescu in a radio interview.

Romanian choreographer Gigi Caciuleanu, who fled Romania in 1972 and has never returned, said he "leapt with joy" when he heard Ceausescu had been overthrown.

"Yesterday Romania was a grey country where no one laughed anymore," Ceausescu said. "Today, already, my mother told me that people were laughing in the roads. It's a sign that anything is possible."

The Soviet Union said it hoped calm would return to Romania allowing the creation of stable new government.

"We have no doubt that the Romanian people will show enough wisdom to preserve calm and stability in spite of the dramatic events and that conditions will be created for normal life, that new institutions of power will be formed in normal conditions," Foreign Ministry spokesman Vadim Pavlyev told Reuters.

White House spokesman Martin Fitzwater said "a terrible burden of dictatorial rule appears to have been lifted from Romania." He said Washington was prepared to assist the new government if it moves towards democracy.

West German Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher said the desire for freedom swept through Europe like a storm in 1989.

"Two hundred years after the French Revolution human rights and fundamental freedoms have again proved their strength," Genscher said. "The people of Romania have won a great victory against a dictatorial regime that despised human beings."

East Germany, a staunch ally of Romania until its own revolution two months ago, hailed Ceausescu's fall, as a step toward democracy: "We extend our heartfelt greetings to the Romanian people and our best wishes for success on this path."

Italian Foreign Minister Gianni de Michelis said he admired the demonstrators who had managed to overthrow Ceausescu.

"To the Romanian people, who fought with such courage, we express our admiration and also our profound condolences for the many victims," Gianni said in a statement in Paris. "The fall of Ceausescu removes the main cause of the bloody repression in Romania, and lays the basis for that people, to whom we are particularly close, to build a free and democratic future."

In the Hague several hundred people gathered in front of the Romanian embassy and burnt an effigy of Ceausescu.

Dutch Prime Minister Ruud Lubbers expressed joy that Ceausescu was out of office and said the West should quickly extend medical and humanitarian help to Romania.

"It has become ever clearer how unjust and intolerable the repression was," Lubbers said, referring to the force recently used to put down protests in Romania.

Portuguese President Mario Soares said the removal of Ceausescu put an end to a "demented nightmare."

Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto, who in 1988 became the first civilian Pakistani leader after 11 years of military rule, toured the exercise Friday.

The high profile of the war games appeared aimed at improving the image of the Pakistan army, which has seized power repeatedly in the country's 42-year history.

Pakistan and India last clashed in 1971 in a war that resulted in the creation of Bangladesh from former East Pakistan.

The countries still trade artillery fire high in the Karakoram Mountains across a ceasefire line that separates Pakistani and Indian-controlled sections of predominantly Muslim Jammu-Kashmir.

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S. African police clash with rebels, 2 killed

JOHANNESBURG (Agencies) — A black nationalist guerrilla and a policeman were killed in a skirmish near South Africa's border with Swaziland, police said Saturday.

Police found several guerrillas Friday close to Border Gate, a frontier post near Komatipoort in eastern Transvaal province, a police spokesman said.

The suspects opened fire when police tried to make an arrest. Police killed one guerrilla and a black officer was shot dead.

The exiled African National Congress anti-apartheid group has been waging a low-level war against white rule since the early 1960s, when the organisation was outlawed in South Africa.

Meanwhile, trying to quash persistent rumours, the government said Friday that jailed black leader Nelson Mandela would not be freed before the end of the year.

There remains strong speculation, not discouraged by the government, that Mandela will be freed in January or early February. A broad range of black leaders say Mandela must be released before they can accept President F.W. de Klerk's invitation to negotiate a new constitution that would extend political rights to blacks.

Rumours that Mandela would be freed before Christmas spread earlier this week following unsubstantiated reports that British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher formally requested South African authorities to take this step.

Mrs. Thatcher's office denied that any time frame had been added to her standing request that Mandela be freed "as soon as possible."

South Africa's Bureau for Information, in a statement, said Friday: "In response to numerous press inquiries concerning the possible release of Mr. Nelson Mandela, the bureau would like to make it clear that there will be no developments in this regard during the festive season."

The bureau said this meant Mandela would not be freed before Jan. 1.

Gorbachev warns separatists of bloodshed, death in split

MOSCOW (Agencies) — Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev Saturday warned regional separatists who want their republics to leave the Soviet Union that secession would sow "discord, bloodshed and death."

His harsh statement was made in a parliamentary debate over a proposed constitutional committee, during which Baltic deputies denounced as illegal the Soviet Union's 1940 incorporation of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia.

"Nowadays to exercise self-determination through secession is to upset the union, to pit peoples against one another and to sow discord, bloodshed and death," Gorbachev said.

The Soviet leader did not elaborate, but his statement that secession would lead to violence was a clear warning to nationalists in republics around the Soviet periphery that their actions could prompt civil war.

His statements to the Congress of People's Deputies appeared to be aimed largely at the Baltic republics of Lithuania, Estonia and Latvia, which have become increasingly militant in their push for more autonomy from the Kremlin.

Earlier this week the Lithuanian Communist Party defied Gorbachev and voted to declare itself independent from the central Soviet party.

Gorbachev has announced the Communist Party Central Committee will hold a plenum on the issue in the next few days.

The Baltic deputies also refused to participate in the debate in Congress on the Committee of Constitutional Supervision, which began Friday.

The commission was approved Saturday by a vote of 1,647 to 116, with 115 abstentions, despite the Baltic protests that it would infringe their rights before new relationships between the Kremlin and the 15 republics had been determined.

A Lithuanian lawmaker has challenged the Kremlin before the entire Soviet Congress to begin talks leading to full independence for his Baltic republic.

Deputy and lawyer Kazimeras Motieka told deputies that Lithuania "was forcibly included in the Soviet Union." He said if the Kremlin is serious about reform, it should reverse results of the crimes of dictator Josef Stalin, who annexed the Baltic region.

"As a person empowered by the voters of Lithuania, I call upon the government of the USSR to begin official negotiations in the near future with fully empowered representatives of Lithuania on the liquidation of Stalinist crimes and on the restoration of the independence of the Lithuanian state," Motieka said.

Drawing a parallel with the events in Romania, where President Nicolae Ceausescu was overthrown Friday, Motieka said: "We also have a dictator — Moscow. If the Soviet Union is building a government of laws, well, legality and occupation don't go together."

Free elections are expected next year in three other Soviet Bloc countries.

East Germany has scheduled elections for May 6, and Bulgaria and Czechoslovakia have announced plans for free elections before the end of June.

In contrast to East Germany, Czechoslovakia and Bulgaria, where popular revolts swiftly forced hard-line Communist leaders from power, Hungary's evolution to democracy has been gradual.

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